

LOWELL'S

POETICAL WORKS





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THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

“

COMPLETE EDITION.



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TO

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS,

THIS FIRST COMPLETE EDITION OF MY POEMS

IS

AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THRENODIA.

GONE, gone from us ! and shall we
see
Those sibyl-leaves of destiny,
Those calm eyes, nevermore ?
Those deep, dark eyes so warm and
bright,
Wherein the fortunes of the man
Lay slumbering in prophetic light,
In characters a child might scan ?
So bright, and gone forth utterly !
O stern word — Nevermore !

The stars of those two gentle eyes
Will shine no more on earth ;
Quenched are the hopes that had their
birth,
As we watched them slowly rise,
Stars of a mother's fate ;
And she would read them o'er and o'er,
Pondering as she sate,
Over their dear astrology,
Which she had conned and conned
before,
Deeming she needs must read aright
What was writ so passing bright.
And yet, alas ! she knew not why,
Her voice would falter in its song,
And tears would slide from out her eye,
Silent, as they were doing wrong.
O stern word — Nevermore !

The tongue that scarce had learned
to claim
An entrance to a mother's heart
By that dear talisman, a mother's name,
Sleeps all forgetful of its art !
I loved to see the infant soul
(How mighty in the weakness
Of its untutored meekness !)
Peep timidly from out its nest,

His lips, the while,
Fluttering with half-fledged words,
Or hushing to a smile
That more than words expressed,
When his glad mother on him stole
And snatched him to her breast !
O, thoughts were brooding in those
eyes,
That would have soared like strong-
winged birds
Far, far, into the skies,
Gladding the earth with song,
And gushing harmonies,
Had he but tarried with us long !
O stern word — Nevermore !

How peacefully they rest,
Crossfolded there
Upon his little breast,
Those small, white hands that ne'er
were still before,
But ever sported with his mother's hair,
Or the plain cross that on her breast
she wore !
Her heart no more will beat
To feel the touch of that soft palm,
That ever seemed a new surprise
Sending glad thoughts up to her eyes
To bless him with their holy calm, —
Sweet thoughts ! they made her eyes
as sweet.
How quiet are the hands
That wove those pleasant bands !
But that they do not rise and sink
With his calm breathing, I should think
That he were dropped asleep.
Alas ! too deep, too deep
Is this his slumber !
Time scarce can number
The years ere he will wake again.
O, may we see his eyelids open then !
O stern word — Nevermore !

As the airy gossamere,
 Floating in the sunlight clear,
 Where'er it toucheth clingeth tightly,
 Round glossy leaf or stump unsightly,
 So from his spirit wandered out
 Tendrils spreading all about,
 Knitting all things to its thrall
 With a perfect love of all :
 O stern word — Nevermore !

He did but float a little way
 Adown the stream of time,
 With dreamy eyes watching the ripples
 play,
 Or hearkening their fairy chime ;
 His slender sail
 Ne'er felt the gale ;
 He did but float a little way,
 And, putting to the shore
 While yet 't was early day,
 Went calmly on his way,
 To dwell with us no more !
 No jarring did he feel,
 No grating on his vessel's keel ;
 A strip of silver sand
 Mingled the waters with the land
 Where he was seen no more :
 O stern word — Nevermore !

Full short his journey was ; no dust
 Of earth unto his sandals gave ;
 The weary weight that old men must,
 He bore not to the grave.
 He seemed a cherub who had lost his
 way
 And wandered hither, so his stay
 With us was short, and 't was most meet
 That he should be no delver in earth's
 clod,
 Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet
 To stand before his God :
 O blest word — Evermore !

1839.

THE SIRENS.

THE sea is lonely, the sea is dreary,
 The sea is restless and uneasy ;
 Thou seekest quiet, thou art weary,
 Wandering thou knowest not whither ; —
 Our little isle is green and breezy,

Come and rest thee ! O come hither
 Come to this peaceful home of ours,
 Where evermore
 The low west-wind creeps panting up
 the shore
 To be at rest among the flowers ;
 Full of rest, the green moss lifts,
 As the dark waves of the sea
 Draw in and out of rocky rifts,
 Calling solemnly to thee
 With voices deep and hollow, —
 “ To the shore
 Follow ! O, follow !
 To be at rest forevermore !
 Forevermore ! ”

Look how the gray old Ocean
 From the depth of his heart rejoices,
 Heaving with a gentle motion,
 When he hears our restful voices ;
 List how he sings in an undertone,
 Chiming with our melody ;
 And all sweet sounds of earth and air
 Melt into one low voice alone,
 That murmurs over the weary sea,
 And seems to sing from everywhere, —
 “ Here mayst thou harbor peacefully,
 Here mayst thou rest from the aching
 oar ;

Turn thy curv'd prow ashore,
 And in our green isle rest forevermore !
 Forevermore ! ”
 And Echo half wakes in the wooded
 hill,
 And, to her heart so calm and deep,
 Murmurs over in her sleep,
 Doubtfully pausing and murmuring still
 “ Evermore ! ”

Thus, on Life's weary sea,
 Hearth the marinere
 Voices sweet, from far and near,
 Ever singing low and clear,
 Ever singing longingly.

Is it not better here to be,
 Than to be toiling late and soon ?
 In the dreary night to see
 Nothing but the blood-red moon
 Go up and down into the sea ;
 Or, in the loneliness of day,
 To see the still seals only
 Solemnly lift their faces gray,
 Making it yet more lonely ?
 Is it not better, than to hear

Only the sliding of the wave
 Beneath the plank, and feel so near
 A cold and lonely grave,
 A restless grave, where thou shalt lie
 Even in death unquietly?
 Look down beneath thy wave-worn
 bark,

Lean over the side and see
 The leaden eye of the sidelong shark
 Upturn'd patiently,
 Ever waiting there for thee :
 Look down and see those shapeless
 forms,

Which ever keep their dreamless
 sleep

Far down within the gloomy deep,
 And only stir themselves in storms,
 Rising like islands from beneath,
 And snorting through the angry spray,
 As the frail vessel perisheth
 In the whirls of their unwieldy play ;

Look down ! Look down !
 Upon the seaweed, slimy and dark,
 That waves its arms so lank and brown,
 Beckoning for thee !
 Look down beneath thy wave-worn
 bark

Into the cold depth of the sea !

Look down ! Look down !
 Thus, on Life's lonely sea,
 Heareth the marinere
 Voices sad, from far and near,
 Ever singing full of fear,
 Ever singing drearfully.

Here all is pleasant as a dream :
 The wind scarce shaketh down the dew,
 The green grass floweth like a stream
 Into the ocean's blue ;

Listen ! O, listen !

Here is a gush of many streams,
 A song of many birds,
 And every wish and longing seems
 Lulled to a numbered flow of words, —
 Listen ! O, listen !

Here ever hum the golden bees
 Underneath full-blossomed trees,
 At once with glowing fruit and flowers
 crowned ; —

The sand is so smooth, the yellow sand,
 That thy keel will not grate as it touches
 the land ;

All around with a slumberous sound,
 The singing waves slide up the strand,

And there, where the smooth, wet pebbles
 be,

The waters gurgle longingly,
 As if they fain would seek the shore,
 To be at rest from the ceaseless roar,
 To be at rest forevermore, —

Forevermore.

Thus, on Life's gloomy sea,
 Heareth the marinere
 Voices sweet, from far and near,
 Ever singing in his ear,
 "Here is rest and peace for thee!"

NANTASKET, July, 1840.

 IRENÉ.

HERS is a spirit deep, and crystal-
 clear ;

Calmly beneath her earnest face it lies,
 Free without boldness, meek without a
 fear,

Quicker to look than speak its sympa-
 thies ;

Far down into her large and patient
 eyes

I gaze, deep-drinking of the infinite,
 As, in the mid-watch of a clear, still
 night,

I look into the fathomless blue skies.

So circled lives she with Love's holy
 light,

That from the shade of self she walketh
 free ;

The garden of her soul still keepeth
 she

An Eden where the snake did never
 enter ;

She hath a natural, wise sincerity,
 A simple truthfulness, and these have
 lent her

A dignity as moveless as the centre ;
 So that no influence of earth can stir
 Her steadfast courage, nor can take
 away

The holy peacefulness, which, night
 and day,

Unto her queenly soul doth minister.

Most gentle is she ; her large charity
 (An all unwitting, childlike gift in her)
 Not freer is to give than meek to bear :

And, though herself not unacquaint
with care,
Hath in her heart wide room for all
that be, —
Her heart that hath no secrets of its
own,
But open is as eglantine full blown.
Cloudless forever is her brow serene,
Speaking calm hope and trust within
her, whence
Welleth a noiseless spring of patience,
That keepeth all her life so fresh, so
green
And full of holiness, that every look,
The greatness of her woman's soul re-
vealing,
Unto me bringeth blessing, and a feel-
ing
As when I read in God's own holy
book.

A graciousness in giving that doth
make
The small'st gift greatest, and a sense
most meek
Of worthiness, that doth not fear to
take
From others, but which always fears to
speak
Its thanks in utterance, for the giver's
sake ; —
The deep religion of a thankful heart,
Which rests instinctively in Heaven's
clear law
With a full peace, that never can de-
part
From its own steadfastness ; — a holy
awe
For holy things, — not those which men
call holy,
But such as are reveal'd to the eyes
Of a true woman's soul bent down and
lowly
Before the face of daily mysteries ; —
A love that blossoms soon, but ripens
slowly
To the full goldenness of fruitful prime,
Enduring with a firmness that defies
All shallow tricks of circumstance and
time,
By a sure insight knowing where to
cling,
And where it clingeth never wither-
ing ; —

These are Irené's dowry, which no fate
Can shake from their serene, deep-
builded state.

In-seeing sympathy is hers, which
chasteneth
No less than loveth, scorning to be
bound
With fear of blame, and yet which ever
hasteneth
To pour the balm of kind looks on the
wound,
If they be wounds which such sweet
teaching makes,
Giving itself a pang for others' sakes ;
No want of faith, that chills with side-
long eye,
Hath she ; no jealousy, no Levite pride
That passeth by upon the other side ;
For in her soul there never dwelt a lie.
Right from the hand of God her spirit
came
Unstained, and she hath ne'er forgotten
whence
It came, nor wandered far from thence,
But laboreth to keep her still the same,
Near to her place of birth, that she
may not
Soil her white raiment with an earthly
spot.

Yet sets she not her soul so steadily
Above, that she forgets her ties to
earth,
But her whole thought would almost
seem to be
How to make glad one lowly human
hearth ;
For with a gentle courage she doth
strive
In thought and word and feeling so to
live
As to make earth next heaven ; and
her heart
Herein doth show its most exceeding
worth,
That, bearing in our frailty her just
part,
She hath not shrunk from evils of this
life,
But hath gone calmly forth into the
strife,
And all its sins and sorrows hath with-
stood

With lofty strength of patient woman-
hood :
For this I love her great soul more than
all,
That, being bound, like us, with earthly
thrall,
She walks so bright and heaven-like
therein, —
Too wise, too meek, too womanly, to
sin.

Like a lone star through riven storm-
clouds seen
By sailors, tempest-tost upon the sea,
Telling of rest and peaceful heavens
nigh,
Unto my soul her star-like soul hath
been,
Her sight as full of hope and calm to
me ; —
For she unto herself hath builded high
A home serene, wherein to lay her
head,
Earth's noblest thing, a Woman per-
fected.
1840.

SERENADE.

FROM the close-shut windows gleams
no spark,
The night is chilly, the night is dark,
The poplars shiver, the pine-trees moan,
My hair by the autumn breeze is blown,
Under thy window I sing alone,
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

The darkness is pressing coldly around,
The windows shake with a lonely sound,
The stars are hid and the night is drear,
The heart of silence throbs in thine ear,
In thy chamber thou sittest alone,
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

The world is happy, the world is wide,
Kind hearts are beating on every side ;
Ah, why should we lie so coldly curled
Alone in the shell of this great world ?
Why should we any more be alone ?
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !

O, 't is a bitter and dreary word,
The saddest by man's ear ever heard !

We each are young, we each have a
heart,
Why stand we ever coldly apart ?
Must we forever, then, be alone ?
Alone, alone, ah woe ! alone !
1840.

WITH A PRESSED FLOWER.

THIS little blossom from afar
Hath come from other lands to thine ;
For, once, its white and drooping star
Could see its shadow in the Rhine.

Perchance some fair-haired German
maid
Hath plucked one from the self-same
stalk,
And numbered over, half afraid,
Its petals in her evening walk.

“ He loves me, loves me not,” she
cries ;
“ He loves me more than earth or
heaven ! ”
And their glad tears have filled her
eyes
To find the number was uneven.

And thou must count its petals well,
Because it is a gift from me :
And the last one of all shall tell
Something I 've often told to thee.

But here at home, where we were born,
Thou wilt find flowers just as true,
Down-bending every summer morn,
With freshness of New-England dew.

For Nature, ever kind to love,
Hath granted them the same sweet
tongue,
Whether with German skies above,
Or here our granite rocks among.
1840.

THE BEGGAR.

A BEGGAR through the world am I, —
From place to place I wander by.

Fill up my pilgrim's scrip for me,
For Christ's sweet sake and charity !

A little of thy steadfastness,
Rounded with leafy gracefulness,
Old oak, give me, —
That the world's blasts may round me
 blow,
And I yield gently to and fro,
While my stout-hearted trunk below
And firm-set roots unshaken be.

Some of thy stern, unyielding might,
Enduring still through day and night
Rude tempest-shock and withering
 blight, —
That I may keep at bay
The changeful April sky of chance
And the strong tide of circumstance, —
Give me, old granite gray,

Some of thy pensiveness serene,
Some of thy never-dying green,
Put in this scrip of mine, —
That griefs may fall like snow-flakes
 light,
And deck me in a robe of white,
Ready to be an angel bright, —
O sweetly mournful pine.

A little of thy merriment,
Of thy sparkling, light content,
Give me, my cheerful brook, —
That I may still be full of glee
And gladness, where'er I be,
Though fickle fate hath prisoned me
In some neglected nook.

Ye have been very kind and good
To me, since I've been in the wood ;
Ye have gone nigh to fill my heart ;
But good by, kind friends, every one,
I've far to go ere set of sun ;
Of all good things I would have part,
The day was high ere I could start,
And so my journey's scarce begun.

Heaven help me ! how could I forget
To beg of thee, dear violet !
Some of thy modesty,
That blossoms here as well, unseen,
As if before the world thou 'dst been,
O, give, to strengthen me.

MY LOVE.

I.

NOT as all other women are
Is she that to my soul is dear ;
Her glorious fancies come from far,
Beneath the silver evening-star,
And yet her heart is ever near.

II.

Great feelings hath she of her own,
Which lesser souls may never know ;
God giveth them to her alone,
And sweet they are as any tone
Wherewith the wind may choose to
 blow.

III.

Yet in herself she dwelleth not,
Although no home were half so fair ;
No simplest duty is forgot,
Life hath no dim and lowly spot
That doth not in her sunshine share.

IV.

She doeth little kindnesses,
Which most leave undone, or despise ;
For naught that sets one heart at ease,
And giveth happiness or peace,
Is low-esteemed in her eyes.

V.

She hath no scorn of common things,
And, though she seem of other birth,
Round us her heart entwines and
 clings,
And patiently she folds her wings
To tread the humble paths of earth.

VI.

Blessing she is : God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow,
Nor hath she ever chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless.

VII.

She is most fair, and thereunto
Her life doth rightly harmonize ;
Feeling or thought that was not true
Ne'er made less beautiful the blue
Unclouded heaven of her eyes.

VIII.

She is a woman : one in whom
The spring-time of her childish years
Hath never lost its fresh perfume,
Though knowing well that life hath room
For many blights and many tears.

IX.

I love her with a love as still
As a broad river's peaceful might,
Which, by high tower and lowly mill,
Goes wandering at its own will,
And yet doth ever flow aright.

X.

And, on its full, deep breast serene,
Like quiet isles my duties lie ;
It flows around them and between,
And makethem fresh and fair and green,
Sweet homes wherein to live and die.

1840.

SUMMER STORM.

UNTREMULOUS in the river clear,
Toward the sky's image, hangs the im-
aged bridge ;

So still the air that I can hear
The slender clarion of the unseen midge ;
Out of the stillness, with a gathering
creep,

Like rising wind in leaves, which now
decreases,
Now lulls, now swells, and all the while
increases,

The huddling trample of a drove of
sheep
Tilts the loose planks, and then as grad-
ually ceases

In dust on the other side ; life's em-
blem deep,
A confused noise between two silences,
Finding at last in dust precarious peace.
On the wide marsh the purple-blos-
somed grasses

Soak up the sunshine ; sleeps the
drumming tide,
Save when the wedge-shaped wake in
silence passes

Of some slow water-rat, whose sinu-
ous glide

Wavers the long green sedge's shade
from side to side ;

But up the west, like a rock-shivered
surge,

Climbs a great cloud edged with sun-
whitened spray ;
Huge whirls of foam boil toppling o'er
its verge,

And falling still it seems, and yet it
climbs away.

Suddenly all the sky is hid
As with the shutting of a lid,
One by one great drops are falling

Doubtful and slow,
Down the pane they are crookedly
crawling,

And the wind breathes low ;
Slowly the circles widen on the river,
Widen and mingle, one and all ;
Here and there the slenderer flowers
shiver,

Struck by an icy rain-drop's fall.

Now on the hills I hear the thunder
mutter,

The wind is gathering in the west ;
The upturned leaves first whiten and
flutter,

Then droop to a fitful rest ;
Up from the stream with sluggish flap
Struggles the gull and floats away ;
Nearer and nearer rolls the thunder-
clap, —

We shall not see the sun go down to-
day :

Now leaps the wind on the sleepy marsh,
And tramples the grass with terrified
feet,

The startled river turns leaden and harsh.
You can hear the quick heart of the
tempest beat.

Look ! look ! that livid flash !
And instantly follows the rattling thun-
der,

As if some cloud-crag, split asunder,
Fell, splintering with a ruinous
crash,

On the Earth, which crouches in silence
under ;

And now a solid gray wall of rain
Shuts off the landscape, mile by mile .
For a breath's space I see the blue
wood again,

And, ere the next heart-beat, the wind-
 hurled pile,
 That seemed but now a league aloof,
 Bursts crackling o'er the sun-parched
 roof ;
 Against the windows the storm comes
 dashing,
 Through tattered foliage the hail tears
 crashing,
 The blue lightning flashes,
 The rapid hail clashes,
 The white waves are tumbling,
 And, in one baffled roar,
 Like the toothless sea mumbling
 A rock-bristled shore,
 The thunder is rumbling
 And crashing and crumbling, —
 Will silence return never more ?

Hush ! Still as death,
 The tempest holds his breath
 As from a sudden will ;
 Therain stopsshort, but from the eaves
 You see it drop, and hear it from the
 leaves,
 All is so bodingly still ;
 Again, now, now, again
 Plashes the rain in heavy gouts,
 The crinkled lightning
 Seems ever brightening,
 And loud and long
 Again the thunder shouts
 His battle-song, —
 One quivering flash,
 One wildering crash,
 Followed by silence dead and dull,
 As if the cloud, let go,
 Leapt bodily below
 To whelm the earth in one mad over-
 throw,
 And then a total lull.

Gone, gone, so soon !
 No more my half-crazed fancy there
 Can shape a giant in the air,
 No more I see his streaming hair,
 The writhing portent of his form ; —
 The pale and quiet moon
 Makes her calm forehead bare,
 And the last fragments of the storm,
 Likeshattered rigging from a fight at sea,
 Silent and few, are drifting over me.

1839.

LOVE.

TRUE Love is but a humble, low-born
 thing,
 And hath its food served up in earthen
 ware ;
 It is a thing to walk with, hand in hand,
 Through the every-dayness of this work-
 day world,
 Baring its tender feet to every rough-
 ness,
 Yet letting not one heart-beat go astray
 From Beauty's law of plainness and
 content ;
 A simple, fireside thing, whose quiet
 smile
 Can warm earth's poorest hovel to a
 home ;
 Which, when our autumn cometh, as it
 must,
 And life in the chill wind shivers bare
 and leafless,
 Shall still be blest with Indian-summer
 youth
 In bleak November, and, with thank-
 ful heart,
 Smile on its ample stores of garnered
 fruit,
 As full of sunshine to our aged eyes
 As when it nursed the blossoms of our
 spring.
 Such is true Love, which steals into
 the heart
 With feet as silent as the lightsome
 dawn
 That kisses smooth the rough brows
 of the dark,
 And hath its will through blissful gen-
 tleness, —
 Not like a rocket, which, with savage
 glare,
 Whirs suddenly up, then bursts, and
 leaves the night
 Painfully quivering on the dazed eyes :
 A love that gives and takes, that seeth
 faults,
 Not with flaw-seeking eyes like needle
 points,
 But loving-kindly ever looks them
 down
 With the o'ercoming faith of meek for-
 giveness ;
 A love that shall be new and fresh each
 hour,

As is the golden mystery of sunset,
 Or the sweet coming of the evening
 star,
 Alike, and yet most unlike, every day,
 And seeming ever best and fairest *now*;
 A love that doth not kneel for what it
 seeks,
 But faces Truth and Beauty as their
 peer,
 Showing its worthiness of noble
 thoughts
 By a clear sense of inward nobleness;
 A love that in its object findeth not
 All grace and beauty, and enough to
 sate
 Its thirst of blessing, but, in all of good
 Found there, it sees but Heaven-grant-
 ed types
 Of good and beauty in the soul of man,
 And traces, in the simplest heart that
 beats,
 A family-likeness to its chosen one,
 That claims of it the rights of brother-
 hood.
 For love is blind but with the fleshly
 eye,
 That so its inner sight may be more
 clear;
 And outward shows of beauty only so
 Are needful at the first, as is a hand
 To guide and to uphold an infant's
 steps:
 Great spirits need them not: their ear-
 nest look
 Pierces the body's mask of thin dis-
 guise,
 And beauty ever is to them revealed,
 Behind the unshapeliest, meanest lump
 of clay,
 With arms outstretched and eager face
 ablaze,
 Yearning to be but understood and
 loved.

1840.

TO PERDITA, SINGING.

Thy voice is like a fountain,
 Leaping up in clear moonshine;
 Silver, silver, ever mounting,
 Ever sinking,
 Without thinking,
 To that brimful heart of thine.

Every sad and happy feeling,
 Thou hast had in bygone years,
 Through thy lips comes stealing, steal-
 ing,
 Clear and low;
 All thy smiles and all thy tears
 In thy voice awaken,
 And sweetness, wove of joy and woe,
 From their teaching it hath taken:
 Feeling and music move together,
 Like a swan and shadow ever
 Floating on a sky-blue river
 In a day of cloudless weather.

It hath caught a touch of sadness,
 Yet it is not sad;
 It hath tones of clearest gladness,
 Yet it is not glad;
 A dim, sweet twilight voice it is
 Where to-day's accustomed blue
 Is over-grayed with memories,
 With starry feelings quivered through.

Thy voice is like a fountain
 Leaping up in sunshine bright,
 And I never weary counting
 Its clear droppings, lone and single,
 Or when in one full gush they mingle.
 Shooting in melodious light.

Thine is music such as yields
 Feelings of old brooks and fields,
 And, around this pent-up room,
 Sheds a woodland, free perfume;
 O, thus forever sing to me!
 O, thus forever!
 The green, bright grass of childhood
 bring to me,
 Flowing like an emerald river,
 And the bright blue skies above!
 O, sing them back, as fresh as ever,
 Into the bosom of my love,—
 The sunshine and the merriment,
 The unsought, evergreen content,
 Of that never cold time,
 The joy, that, like a clear breeze,
 went
 Through and through the old time!

Peace sits within thine eyes,
 With white hands crossed in joyful
 rest,
 While, through thy lips and face,
 arise

The melodies from out thy breast ;
 She sits and sings,
 With folded wings
 And white arms crost,
 "Weep not for bygone things,
 They are not lost :
 The beauty which the summer time
 O'er thine opening spirit shed,
 The forest oracles sublime
 That filled thy soul with joyous dread,
 The scent of every smallest flower
 That made thy heart sweet for an
 hour, —
 Yea, every holy influence,
 Flowing to thee, thou knewest not
 whence,
 In thine eyes to-day is seen,
 Fresh as it hath ever been ;
 Promptings of Nature, beckonings
 sweet,
 Whatever led thy childish feet,
 Still will linger unawares
 The guiders of thy silver hairs ;
 Every look and every word
 Which thou givest forth to-day,
 Tell of the singing of the bird
 Whose music stilled thy boyish
 play."

Thy voice is like a fountain,
 Twinkling up in sharp starlight,
 When the moon behind the mountain
 Dims the low East with faintest
 white,
 Ever darkling,
 Ever sparkling,

We know not if 't is dark or bright ;
 But, when the great moon hath rolled
 round,
 And, sudden-slow, its solemn power
 Grows from behind its black, clear-
 edged bound,
 No spot of dark the fountain keepeth,
 But, swift as opening eyelids, leapeth
 Into a waving silver flower.

1841.

THE MOON.

My soul was like the sea,
 Before the moon was made,
 Moaning in vague immensity,
 Of its own strength afraid,
 Unrestful and unstaid.

Through every rift it foamed in vain,
 About its earthly prison,
 Seeking some unknown thing in pain,
 And sinking restless back again,
 For yet no moon had risen :
 Its only voice a vast dumb moan,
 Of utterless anguish speaking,
 It lay unhopefully alone,
 And lived but in an aimless seeking.

So was my soul ; but when 't was full
 Of unrest to o'erloading,
 A voice of something beautiful
 Whispered a dim foreboding,
 And yet so soft, so sweet, so low,
 It had not more of joy than woe ;
 And, as the sea doth oft lie still,
 Making its waters meet,
 As if by an unconscious will,
 For the moon's silver feet,
 So lay my soul within mine eyes
 When thou, its guardian moon, didst
 rise.

And now, howe'er its waves above
 May toss and seem unuseful,
 One strong, eternal law of Love,
 With guidance sure and peaceful,
 As calm and natural as breath,
 Moves its great deeps through life and
 death.

REMEMBERED MUSIC.

A FRAGMENT.

THICK-RUSHING, like an ocean vast
 Of bisons the far prairie shaking,
 The notes crowd heavily and fast
 As surfs, one plunging while the last
 Draws seaward from its foamy break-
 ing.

Or in low murmurs they began,
 Rising and rising momentarily,
 As o'er a harp Æolian
 A fitful breeze, until they ran
 Up to a sudden ecstasy.

And then, like minute-drops of rain
 Ringing in water silverly,

They lingering dropped and dropped
again,
Till it was almost like a pain
To listen when the next would be.
1840.

SONG.

TO M. L.

A LILY thou wast when I saw thee first,
A lily-bud not opened quite,
That hourly grew more pure and
white,
By morning, and noontide, and evening
nursed :
In all of nature thou hadst thy share ;
Thou wast waited on
By the wind and sun ;
The rain and the dew for thee took care ;
It seemed thou never couldst be more
fair.

A lily thou wast when I saw thee first,
A lily-bud ; but O, how strange,
How full of wonder was the change,
When, ripe with all sweetness, thy full
bloom burst !

How did the tears to my glad eyes start,
When the woman-flower
Reached its blossoming hour,
And I saw the warm deeps of thy
golden heart !

Glad death may pluck thee, but never
before

The gold dust of thy bloom divine
Hath dropped from thy heart into
mine,

To quicken its faint germs of heavenly
lore ;

For no breeze comes nigh thee but
carries away

Some impulses bright
Of fragrance and light,

Which fall upon souls that are lone
and astray,

To plant fruitful hopes of the flower
of day.

ALLEGRA.

I WOULD more natures were like thine,
That never casts a glance before, —

Thou Hebe, who thy heart's bright wine
So lavishly to all dost pour,
That we who drink forget to pine,
And can but dream of bliss in store.

Thou canst not see a shade in life ;
With sunward instinct thou dost rise,
And, leaving clouds below at strife,
Gazest undazzled at the skies,
With all their blazing splendors rife,
A songful lark with eagle's eyes.

Thou wast some foundling whom the
Hours
Nursed, laughing, with the milk of
Mirth ;
Some influence more gay than ours
Hath ruled thy nature from its birth,
As if thy natal stars were flowers
That shook their seeds round thee on
earth.

And thou, to lull thine infant rest,
Wast cradled like an Indian child ;
All pleasant winds from south and west
With lullabies thine ears beguiled,
Rocking thee in thine oriole's nest,
Till Nature looked at thee and smiled.

Thine every fancy seems to borrow
A sunlight from thy childish years,
Making a golden cloud of sorrow,
A hope-lit rainbow out of tears, —
Thy heart is certain of to-morrow,
Though 'yond to-day it never peers.

I would more natures were like thine,
So innocently wild and free,
Whose sad thoughts, even, leap and
shine,

Like sunny wavelets in the sea,
Making us mindless of the brine,
In gazing on the brilliancy.

THE FOUNTAIN.

INTO the sunshine,
Full of the light,
Leaping and flashing
From morn till night !

Into the moonlight,
Whiter than snow,

Waving so flower-like
When the winds blow !

Into the starlight
Rushing in spray,
Happy at midnight,
Happy by day !

Ever in motion,
Blithesome and cheery,
Still climbing heavenward,
Never weary :—

Glad of all weathers,
Still seeming best,
Upward or downward,
Motion thy rest ;—

Full of a nature
Nothing can tame,
Changed every moment,
Ever the same ;—

Ceaseless aspiring,
Ceaseless content,
Darkness or sunshine
Thy element ;—

Glorious fountain !
Let my heart be
Fresh, changeful, constant,
Upward, like thee !

O D E .

I.

IN the old days of awe and keen-eyed
wonder,

The Poet's song with blood-warm
truth was rife ;

He saw the mysteries which circle under
The outward shell and skin of daily life.
Nothing to him were fleeting time and
fashion,

His soul was led by the eternal law ;
There was in him no hope of fame, no
passion,

But, with calm, godlike eyes he only
saw.

He did not sigh o'er heroes dead and
buried,

Chief-mourner at the Golden Age's
hearse,
Nor deem that souls whom Charon
grim had ferried

Alone were fitting themes of epic verse:
He could believe the promise of to-
morrow,

And feel the wondrous meaning of to-
day ;

He had a deeper faith in holy sorrow
Than the world's seeming loss could
take away.

To know the heart of all things was his
duty,

All things did sing to him to make
him wise,

And, with a sorrowful and conquering
beauty,

The soul of all looked grandly from
his eyes.

He gazed on all within him and without
him,

He watched the flowing of Time's
steady tide,

And shapes of glory floated all about him
And whispered to him, and he
prophesied.

Than all men he more fearless was and
freer,

And all his brethren cried with one
accord, —

“Behold the holy man ! Behold the
Seer !

Him who hath spoken with the unseen
Lord !”

He to his heart with large embrace had
taken

The universal sorrow of mankind,
And, from that root, a shelter never
shaken,

The tree of wisdom grew with sturdy
rind.

He could interpret well the wondrous
voices

Which to the calm and silent spirit
come ;

He knew that the One Soul no more
rejoices

In the star's anthem than the insect's
hum.

He in his heart was ever meek and
humble,

And yet with kingly pomp his num-
bers ran,

As he foresaw how all things false
should crumble

Before the free, uplifted soul of man :
And, when he was made full to over-
flowing

With all the loveliness of heaven and
earth,

Out rushed his song, like molten iron
glowing,

To show God sitting by the humblest
hearth.

With calmest courage he was ever ready
To teach that action was the truth of
thought,

And, with strong arm and purpose firm
and steady,

An anchor for the drifting world he
wrought.

So did he make the meanest man partaker
Of all his brother-gods unto him gave :

All souls did reverence him and name
him Maker,

And when he died heaped temples on
his grave.

And still his deathless words of light
are swimming

Serene throughout the great deep in-
finite

Of human soul, unwaning and undim-
ming,

To cheer and guide the mariner at
night.

II.

But now the Poet is an empty rhymer
Who lies with idle elbow on the grass,

And fits hissing, like a cunning timer,
To all men's prides and fancies as
they pass.

Not his the song, which, in its metre holy,
Chimes with the music of the eternal
stars,

Humbling the tyrant, lifting up the lowly,
And sending sun through the soul's
prison-bars.

Maker no more, — O no! unmaker
rather,

For he unmakes who doth not all put
forth

The power given by our loving Father
To show the body's dross, the spirit's
worth.

Awake! great spirit of the ages olden!
Shiver the mists that hide thy starry
lyre,

And let man's soul be yet again beholden
To thee for wings to soar to her desire.

O, prophesy no more to-morrow's splen-
dor,

Be no more shamefaced to speak out
for Truth,

Lay on her altar all the gushings tender,
The hope, the fire, the loving faith of
youth!

O, prophesy no more the Maker's
coming,

Say not his onward footsteps thou
canst hear

In the dim void, like to the awful hum-
ming

Of the great wings of some new-light-
ed sphere!

O, prophesy no more, but be the Poet!
This longing was but granted unto thee

That, when all beauty thou couldst feel
and know it,

That beauty in its highest thou couldst
be.

O, thou who moanest tost with seelike
longings

Who dimly hearest voices call on thee,
Whose soul is overfilled with mighty
throngings

Of love, and tear, and glorious agony,
Thou of the toil-strung hands and iron
sinews

And soul by Mother Earth with free-
dom fed,

In whom the hero-spirit yet continues,
The old free nature is not chained or
dead,

Arouse! let thy soul break in music-
thunder,

Let loose the ocean that is in thee
pent,

Pour forth thy hope, thy fear, thy love,
thy wonder,

And tell the age what all its signs
have meant.

Where'er thy wildered crowd of breth-
ren jostles,

Where'er there lingers but a shade of
wrong,

There still is need of martyrs and
apostles,

There still are texts for never-dying
song:

From age to age man's still aspiring spirit
Finds wider scope and sees with
clearer eyes,

And thou in larger measure dost inherit
 What made thy great forerunners free
 and wise.

Sit thou enthroned where the Poet's
 mountain

Above the thunder lifts its silent peak,
 And roll thy songs down like a gathering
 fountain,

They all may drink and find the rest
 they seek.

Sing ! there shall silence grow in earth
 and heaven,

A silence of deep awe and wondering ;
 For, listening gladly, bend the angels,
 even,

To hear a mortal like an angel sing.

III.

Among the toil-worn poor my soul is
 seeking

For one to bring the Maker's name to
 light,

To be the voice of that almighty speaking
 Which every age demands to do it
 right.

Proprieties our silken bards environ ;
 He who would be the tongue of this
 wide land

Must string his harp with chords of
 sturdy iron

And strike it with a toil-imbrown'd
 hand ;

One who hath dwelt with Nature well
 attended,

Who hath learnt wisdom from her
 mystic books,

Whose soul with all her countless lives
 hath blended,

So that all beauty awes us in his looks ;
 Who not with body's waste his soul
 hath pampered,

Who as the clear northwestern wind
 is free,

Who walks with Form's observances
 unhampered,

And follows the One Will obediently ;
 Whose eyes, like windows on a breezy
 summit,

Control a lovely prospect every way ;
 Who doth not sound God's sea with
 earthly plummet,

And find a bottom still of worthless
 clay ;

Who heeds not how the lower gusts
 working,

Knowing that one sure wind blows on
 above,

And sees, beneath the foulest faces
 lurking,

One God-built shrine of reverence
 and love ;

Who sees all stars that wheel their
 shining marches

Around the centre fixed of Destiny,
 Where the encircling soul serene o'er-
 arches

The moving globe of being like a sky ;
 Who feels that God and Heaven's great
 deeps are nearer

Him to whose heart his fellow-man is
 nigh,

Who doth not hold his soul's own free-
 dom dearer

Than that of all his brethren, low or
 high ;

Who to the Right can feel himself the
 truer

For being gently patient with the
 wrong,

Who sees a brother in the evildoer,
 And finds in Love the heart's-blood
 of his song ; —

This, this is he for whom the world is
 waiting

Tosing the beatings of its mighty heart,
 Too long hath it been patient with the
 grating

Of scannel-pipes, and heard it mis-
 named Art.

To him the smiling soul of man shall
 listen

Laying awhile its crown of thorns
 aside,

And once again in every eye shall glisten
 The glory of a nature satisfied.

His verse shall have a great command-
 ing motion,

Heaving and swelling with a melody
 Learnt of the sky, the river, and the ocean.

And all the pure, majestic things that
 be.

Awake, then, thou ! we pine for thy
 great presence

To make us feel the soul once more
 sublime,

We are of far too infinite an essence
 To rest contented with the lies of Time

Speak out! and, lo! a hush of deepest wonder
 Shall sink o'er all this many-voic'd scene,
 As when a sudden burst of rattling thunder
 Shatters the blueness of a sky serene.
 1841.

THE FATHERLAND.

WHERE is the true man's fatherland?
 Is it where he by chance is born?
 Doth not the yearning spirit scorn
 In such scant borders to be spanned?
 O yes! his fatherland must be
 As the blue heaven wide and free!

Is it alone where freedom is,
 Where God is God and man is man?
 Doth he not claim a broader span
 For the soul's love of home than this?
 O yes! his fatherland must be
 As the blue heaven wide and free!

Where'er a human heart doth wear
 Joy's myrtle-wreath or sorrow's gyves,
 Where'er a human spirit strives
 After a life more true and fair,
 There is the true man's birthplace grand,
 His is a world-wide fatherland!

Where'er a single slave doth pine,
 Where'er one man may help another, —
 Thank God for such a birthright,
 brother, —
 That spot of earth is thine and mine!
 There is the true man's birthplace grand,
 His is a world-wide fatherland!

THE FORLORN.

THE night is dark, the stinging sleet,
 Swept by the bitter gusts of air,
 Drives whistling down the lonely street,
 And stiffens on the pavement bare.

The street-lamps flare and struggle dim
 Through the white sleet-clouds as they pass,
 Or, governed by a boisterous whim,
 Drop down and rattle on the glass.

One poor, heart-broken, outcast girl
 Faces the east-wind's searching flaws,
 And, as about her heart they whirl,
 Her tattered cloak more tightly draws.

The flat brick walls look cold and bleak,
 Her bare feet to the sidewalk freeze:
 Yet dares she not a shelter seek,
 Though faint with hunger and disease.

The sharp storm cuts her forehead bare,
 And, piercing through her garments thin,
 Beats on her shrunken breast, and there
 Makes colder the cold heart within.

She lingers where a ruddy glow
 Streams outward through an open shutter,
 Adding more bitterness to woe,
 More loneliness to desertion utter.

One half the cold she had not felt
 Until she saw this gush of light
 Spread warmly forth, and seem to melt
 Its slow way through the deadening night.

She hears a woman's voice within,
 Singing sweet words her childhood knew,
 And years of misery and sin
 Furl off, and leave her heaven blue.

Her freezing heart, like one who sinks
 Outwearied in the drifting snow,
 Drowns to deadly sleep and thinks
 No longer of its hopeless woe:

Old fields, and clear blue summer days,
 Old meadows, green with grass and trees,
 That shimmer through the trembling haze
 And whiten in the western breeze, —

Old faces, — all the friendly past
Rises within her heart again,
And sunshine from her childhood cast
Makes summer of the icy rain.

Enhaloed by a mild, warm glow,
From all humanity apart,
She hears old footsteps wandering slow
Through the lone chambers of the heart.

Outside the porch before the door,
Her cheek upon the cold, hard stone,
She lies, no longer foul and poor,
No longer dreary and alone.

Next morning something heavily
Against the opening door did weigh,
And there, from sin and sorrow free,
A woman on the threshold lay.

A smile upon the wan lips told
That she had found a calm release,
And that, from out the want and cold,
The song had borne her soul in peace.

For, whom the heart of man shuts out,
Sometimes the heart of God takes in,
And fences them all round about
With silence 'mid the world's loud din ;

And one of his great charities
Is Music, and it doth not scorn
To close the lids upon the eyes
Of the polluted and forlorn ;

Far was she from her childhood's home,
Farther in guilt had wandered thence,
Yet thither it had bid her come
To die in maiden innocence.

1842.

MIDNIGHT.

THE moon shines white and silent
On the mist, which, like a tide
Of some enchanted ocean,
O'er the wide marsh doth glide,
Spreading its ghost-like billows
Silently far and wide.

A vague and starry magic
Makes all things mysteries,
And lures the earth's dumb spirit
Up to the longing skies, —
I seem to hear dim whispers,
And tremulous replies.

The fireflies o'er the meadow
In pulses come and go ;
The elm-trees' heavy shadow
Weighs on the grass below ;
And faintly from the distance
The dreaming cock doth crow.

All things look strange and mystic,
The very bushes swell
And take wild shapes and motions,
As if beneath a spell, —
They seem not the same lilacs
From childhood known so well.

The snow of deepest silence
O'er everything doth fall,
So beautiful and quiet,
And yet so like a pall, —
As if all life were ended,
And rest were come to all.

O wild and wondrous midnight,
There is a might in thee
To make the charmed body
Almost like spirit be,
And give it some faint glimpses
Of immortality !

1842.

A PRAYER.

GOD ! do not let my loved one die,
But rather wait until the time
That I am grown in purity
Enough to enter thy pure clime,
Then take me, I will gladly go,
So that my love remain below !

O, let her stay ! She is by birth
What I through death must learn to
be ;
We need her more on our poor earth,
Than thou canst need in heaven with
thee :
She hath her wings already, I
Must burst this earth-shell ere I fly.

Then, God, take me! We shall be
near,

More near than ever, each to each :
Her angel ears will find more clear
My heavenly than my earthly speech ;
And still, as I draw nigh to thee,
Her soul and mine shall closer be.

1841.

THE HERITAGE.

THE rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick, and stone, and
gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares ;
The bank may break, the factory
burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could hardly
earn
A living that would serve his turn ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,
His stomach craves for dainty fare ;
With sated heart, he hears the pants
Of toiling hinds with brown arms
bare,
And wearies in his easy-chair ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit ?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit ;
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit ?
Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-won merit,
Content that from employment
springs,
A heart that in his labor sings ;

A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit ?
A patience learned of being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,
A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man's son ! there is a toil
That with all others level stands ;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten, soft white hands, —
This is the best crop from thy lands ;
A heritage, it seems to be,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man's son ! scorn not thy state ;
There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great ;
Toil only gives the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last ;
Both, children of the same dear God,
Prove title to your heirship vast
By record of a well-filled past ;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

THE ROSE: A BALLAD.

I.

IN his tower sat the poet
Gazing on the roaring sea,
"Take this rose," he sighed, "and
throw it
Where there's none that loveth me.
On the rock the billow bursteth
And sinks back into the seas,
But in vain my spirit thirsteth
So to burst and be at ease.
Take, O sea ! the tender blossom
That hath lain against my breast ;
On thy black and angry bosom
It will find a surer rest.
Life is vain, and love is hollow,
Ugly death stands there behind,

Hate and scorn and hunger follow
 Him that toileth for his kind."
 Forth into the night he hurled it,
 And with bitter smile did mark
 How the surly tempest whirled it
 Swift into the hungry dark.
 Foam and spray drive back to leeward,
 And the gale, with dreary moan,
 Drifts the helpless blossom seaward
 Through the breakers all alone.

II.

Stands a maiden, on the morrow,
 Musing by the wave-beat strand,
 Half in hope and half in sorrow,
 Tracing words upon the sand :
 " Shall I ever then behold him
 Who hath been my life so long, —
 Ever to this sick heart fold him, —
 Be the spirit of his song ?
 Touch not, sea, the blessed letters
 I have traced upon thy shore,
 Spare his name whose spirit fetters
 Mine with love forevermore !"
 Swells the tide and overflows it,
 But, with omen pure and meet
 Brings a little rose, and throws it
 Humbly at the maiden's feet.
 Full of bliss she takes the token,
 And, upon her snowy breast,
 Soothes the ruffled petals broken
 With the ocean's fierce unrest
 " Love is thine, O heart ! and surely
 Peace shall also be thine own
 For the heart that trusteth purely
 Never long can pine alone."

III.

In his tower sits the poet,
 Blissed new and strange to him
 Fill his heart and overflow it
 With a wonder sweet and dim.
 Up the beach the ocean slideth
 With a whisper of delight,
 And the moon in silence glideth
 Through the peaceful blue of night
 Rippling o'er the poet's shoulder
 Flows a maiden's golden hair,
 Maiden lips, with love grown bolder,
 Kiss his moon-lit forehead bare.
 " Life is joy, and love is power,
 Death all fetters doth unbind,

Strength and wisdom only flower
 When we toil for all our kind.
 Hope is truth, — the future giveth
 More than present takes away,
 And the soul forever liveth
 Nearer God from day to day."
 Not a word the maiden uttered,
 Fullest hearts are slow to speak,
 But a withered rose-leaf fluttered
 Down upon the poet's cheek.

1842.

A LEGEND OF BRITTANY.

PART FIRST.

I.

FAIR as a summer dream was Mar
 garet, —
 Such dream as in a poet's soul might
 start,
 Musing of old loves while the moon
 doth set :
 Her hair was not more sunny than
 her heart,
 Though like a natural golden coronet
 It circled her dear head with careless
 art,
 Mocking the sunshine, that would fain
 have left
 To its frank grace a richer ornament.

II.

His loved one's eyes could poet ever
 speak,
 So kind, so dewy, and so deep were
 hers, —
 But, while he strives, the choicest
 phrase, too weak,
 Their glad reflection in his spirit
 blurs ;
 As one may see a dream dissolve and
 break
 Out of his grasp when he to tell it
 stirs,
 Like that sad Dryad doomed no more
 to bless
 The mortal who revealed her
 nest.

III.

She dwelt forever in a region bright,
 Peopled with living fancies of her
 own,
 Where naught could come but visions
 of delight,
 Far, far aloof from earth's eternal
 moan :
 A summer cloud thrilled through with
 rosy light,
 Floating beneath the blue sky all
 alone,
 Her spirit wandered by itself, and won
 A golden edge from some unsetting sun.

IV.

The heart grows richer that its lot is
 poor, —
 God blesses want with larger sym-
 pathies, —
 I love enters gladliest at the humble
 door,
 And makes the cot a palace with his
 eyes ; —
 So Margaret's heart a softer beauty
 wore,
 And grew in gentleness and patience
 wise,
 For she was but a simple herdsman's
 child,
 A lily chance-sown in the rugged wild.

V.

There was no beauty of the wood or
 field
 But she its fragrant bosom-secret
 knew,
 Nor any but to her would freely yield
 Some grace that in her soul took root
 and grew :
 Nature to her glowed ever new-re-
 vealed,
 All rosy-fresh with innocent morning
 dew,
 And looked into her heart with dim,
 sweet eyes
 That left it full of sylvan memories.

VI.

O, what a face was hers to brighten
 light,
 And give back sunshine with an
 added glow,

To wile each moment with a fresh de-
 light,
 And part of memory's best content-
 ment grow !
 O, how her voice, as with an inmate's
 right,
 Into the strangest heart would wel-
 come go,
 And make it sweet, and ready to become
 Of white and gracious thoughts the
 chosen home !

VII.

None looked upon her but he straight-
 way thought
 Of all the greenest depths of country
 cheer,
 And into each one's heart was freshly
 brought
 What was to him the sweetest time
 of year,
 So was her every look and motion
 fraught
 With out-of-door delights and forest
 lure ;
 Not the first violet on a woodland lea
 Seemed a more visible gift of Spring
 than she.

VIII.

Is love learned only out of poets' books ?
 Is there not somewhat in the drop-
 ping flood,
 And in the nunneries of silent nooks,
 And in the murmured longing of the
 wood,
 That could make Margaret dream of
 lovelorn looks,
 And stir a thrilling mystery in her
 blood
 More trembly secret than Aurora's tear
 Shed in the bosom of an eglatere ?

IX.

Full many a sweet forewarning hath
 the mind,
 Full many a whispering of vague de-
 sire,
 Ere comes the nature destined to unbind
 Its virgin zone, and all its deeps in-
 spire, —
 Low stirrings in the leaves, before the
 wind

Wakes all the green strings of the
forest lyre,
Faint heatings in the calyx, ere the rose
Its warm voluptuous breast doth all un-
close.

x.

Long in its dim recesses pines the spirit,
Wildered and dark, despairingly
alone ;
Though many a shape of beauty wan-
der near it,
And many a wild and half-remem-
bered tone
Tremble from the divine abyss to cheer
it,
Yet still it knows that there is only
one
Before whom it can kneel and tribute
bring,
At once a happy vassal and a king.

xi.

To feel a want, yet scarce know what
it is,
To seek one nature that is always new,
Whose glance is warmer than another's
kiss,
Whom we can bare our inmost
beauty to,
Nor feel deserted afterwards, — for
this
But with our destined co-mate we
can do, —
Such longing instinct fills the mighty
scope
Of the young soul with one mysterious
hope.

xii.

So Margaret's heart grew brimming
with the lore
Of love's enticing secrets; and al-
though
She had found none to cast it down be-
fore.
Yet oft to Fancy's chapel she would
go
To pay her vows, and count the rosary
o'er
Of her love's promised graces : —
happily so

Miranda's hope had pictured Ferdinand
Long ere the gaunt wave tossed him on
the strand.

xiii.

A new-made star that swims the lonely
gloom,
Unwedded yet and longing for the
sun,
Whose beams, the bride-gifts of the
lavish groom,
Blithely to crown the virgin planet
run,
Her being was, watching to see the
bloom
Of love's fresh sunrise roofing one by
one
Its clouds with gold, a triumph-arch
to be
For him who came to hold her heart in
fee.

xiv.

Not far from Margaret's cottage dwelt
a knight
Of the proud Templars, a sworn celi-
bate,
Whose heart in secret fed upon the light
And dew of her ripe beauty, through
the grate
Of his close vow catching what gleams
he might
Of the free heaven, and cursing — all
too late —
The cruel faith whose black walls
hemmed him in
And turned life's crowning bliss to
deadly sin.

xv.

For he had met her in the wood by chance.
And, having drunk her beauty's
wondering spell,
His heart shook like the pennon of a lance
That quivers in a breeze's sudden swell.
And thenceforth, in a close-infolded
trance,
From mistily golden deep to deep he
fell ;
Till earth did waver and fade far away
Beneath the hope in whose warm arms
he lay.

xvi.

A dark, proud man he was, whose half-blown youth

Had shed its blossom even in opening,
Leaving a few that with more winning ruth

Trembling around grave manhood's stem might cling,

More sad than cheery, making, in good sooth,

Like the fringed gentian, a late autumn spring:—

A twilight nature, braided light and gloom,

A youth half-smiling by an open tomb.

xvii.

Fair as an angel, who yet inly wore

A wrinkled heart foreboding his near fall;

Who saw him alway wished to know him more,

As if he were some fate's defiant thrall
And nursed a dreaded secret at its core;

Little he loved, but power most of all,
And that he seemed to scorn, as one who knew

By what foul paths men choose to crawl thereto.

xviii.

He had been noble, but some great deceit
Had turned his better instinct to a vice:

He strove to think the world was all a cheat,

That power and fame were cheap at any price,

That the sure way of being shortly great
Was even to play life's game with loaded dice,

Since he had tried the honest play and found

That vice and virtue differed but in sound.

xix.

Yet Margaret's sight redeemed him for a space

From his own thralldom; man could never be

A hypocrite when first such maiden grace
Smiled in upon his heart; the agony

Of wearing all day long a lying face
Fell lightly from him, and, a moment free,

Erect with wakened faith his spirit stood
And scorned the weakness of his demon-mood.

xx.

Like a sweet wind-harp to him was her thought,

Which would not let the common air come near,

Till from its dim enchantment it had caught

A musical tenderness that brimmed his ear

With sweetness more ethereal than aught
Save silver-dropping snatches that

Rained down from some sad angel's faithful harp

To cool her fallen lover's anguish sharp.

xxi.

Deep in the forest was a little dell

High overarched with the leafy sweep
Of a broad oak, through whose gnarled roots there fell

A slender rill that sung itself asleep,
Where its continuous toil had scooped a well

To please the fairy folk; breathlessly deep

The stillness was, save when the dreaming brook

From its small urn a drizzly murmur shook.

xxii.

The wooded hills sloped upward all around

With gradual rise, and made an even rim,

So that it seemed a mighty casque unbound

From some huge Titan's brow to lighten him,

Agès ago, and left upon the ground,
Where the slow soil had mossed it to the brim,

Till after countless centuries it grew
Into this dell, the haunt of noontide dew.

XXIII.

Dim vistas, sprinkled o'er with sun-
flecked green,
Wound through the thickset trunks
on every side,
And, toward the west, in fancy might be
seen
A gothic window in its blazing pride,
When the low sun, two arching elms
between,
Lit up the leaves beyond, which,
autumn-dyed
With lavish hues, would into splendor
start,
Shaming the labored panes of richest art.

XXIV.

Here, leaning once against the old oak's
trunk,
Mordred, for such was the young
Templar's name,
Saw Margaret come; unseen, the falcon
shrunk
From the meek dove; sharp thrills of
tingling flame
Made him forget that he was vowed a
monk,
And all the outworks of his pride
o'ercame:
Flooded he seemed with bright delicious
pain,
As if a star had burst within his brain.

XXV.

Such power hath beauty and frank in-
nocence:
A flower bloomed forth, that sunshine
glad to bless,
Even from his love's long leafless stem;
the sense
Of exile from Hope's happy realm
grew less,
And thoughts of childish peace, he
knew not whence,
Thronged round his heart with many
an old caress,
Melting the frost there into pearly dew
That mirrored back his nature's morn-
ing-blue.

XXVI.

She turned and saw him, but she felt no
dread,
Her purity, like adamant mail,

Did so encircle her; and yet her head
She drooped, and made her golden
hair her veil,
Through which a glow of rosiest lustre
spread,
Then faded, and anon she stood all
pale,
As snow o'er which a blush of northern-
light
Suddenly reddens, and as soon grows
white.

XXVII.

She thought of Tristrem and of Lancilot,
Of all her dreams, and of kind fairies'
might,
And how that dell was deemed a haun-
ted spot,
Until there grew a mist before her
sight,
And where the present was she half
forgot,
Borne backward through the realms
of old delight,—
Then, starting up awake, she would
have gone,
Yet almost wished it might not be alone.

XXVIII.

How they went home together through
the wood,
And how all life seemed focussed into
one
Thought-dazzling spot that set ablaze
the blood,
What need to tell? Fit language
there is none
For the heart's deepest things. Who
ever wooed
As in his boyish hope he would have
done?
For, when the soul is fullest, the hushed
tongue
Voicelessly trembles like a lute unstrung.

XXIX.

But all things carry the heart's mes-
sages
And know it not, nor doth the heart
well know,
But nature hath her will; even as the
bees,
Blithe go-betweens, fly singing to and
fro

With the fruit-quickening pollen ;—
 hard if these
 Found not some all unthought-of
 way to show
 Their secret each to each ; and so they
 did,
 And one heart's flower-dust into the
 other slid.

xxx.

Young hearts are free ; the selfish world
 it is
 That turns them miserly and cold as
 stone,
 And makes them clutch their fingers on
 the bliss
 Which but in giving truly is their
 own ; —
 She had no dreams of barter, asked not
 his,
 But gave hers freely as she would
 have thrown
 A rose to him, or as that rose gives forth
 Its generous fragrance, thoughtless of
 its worth.

xxxI.

Her summer nature felt a need to bless,
 And a like longing to be blest again ;
 So, from her sky-like spirit, gentleness
 Dropt ever like a sunlit fall of rain,
 And his beneath drank in the bright
 caress
 As thirstily as would a parch'd plain,
 That long hath watched the showers of
 sloping gray
 Forever, ever, falling far away.

xxxII.

How should she dream of ill ? the heart
 filled quite
 With sunshine, like the shepherd's-
 clock at noon,
 Closes its leaves around its warm delight ;
 Whate'er in life is harsh or out of tune
 Is all shut out, no boding shade of light
 Can pierce the opiate ether of its
 swoon :
 Love is but blind as thoughtful justice is,
 But naught can be so wanton-blind as
 bliss.

xxxIII.

All beauty and all life he was to her :
 She questioned not his love, she only
 knew
 That she loved him, and not a pulse
 could stir
 In her whole frame but quivered
 through and through
 With this glad thought, and was a
 minister
 To do him fealty and service true,
 Like golden ripples hasting to the land
 To wreck their freight of sunshine on
 the strand.

xxxIV.

O dewy dawn of love ! O hopes that are
 Hung high, like the cliff-swallow's
 perilous nest,
 Most like to fall when fullest, and that jar
 With every heavier billow ! O unrest
 Than balmiest deeps of quiet sweeter far !
 How did ye triumph now in Marga-
 ret's breast,
 Making it readier to shrink and start
 Than quivering gold of the pond-lily's
 heart !

xxxv.

Here let us pause : O, would the soul
 might ever
 Achieve its immortality in youth,
 When nothing yet hath damped its
 high endeavor
 After the starry energy of truth !
 Here let us pause, and for a moment sever
 This gleam of sunshine from the days
 unruth
 That sometime come to all, for it is good
 To lengthen to the last a sunny mood.

PART SECOND.

I.

As one who, from the sunshine and the
 green,
 Enters the solid darkness of a cave,
 Nor knows what precipice or pit unseen
 May yawn before him with its sudden
 grave,

And, with hushed breath, doth often
 forward lean,
 Dreaming he hears the plashing of a
 wave
 Dimly below, or feels a damper air
 From out some dreary chasin, he knows
 not where ;—

II.

So, from the sunshine and the green of
 love,
 We enter on our story's darker part ;
 And, though the horror of it well may
 move
 An impulse of repugnance in the heart,
 Yet let us think, that, as there 's naught
 above
 The all-embracing atmosphere of Art,
 So also there is naught that falls below
 Her generous reach, though grimed
 with guilt and woe.

III.

Her fittest triumph is to show that good
 Lurks in the heart of evil evermore,
 That love, though scorned, and outcast,
 and withstood,
 Can without end forgive, and yet
 have store ;
 God's love and man's are of the self-
 same blood,
 And He can see that always at the door
 Of foulest hearts the angel-nature yet
 Knocks to return and cancel all its debt.

IV.

It ever is weak falsehood's destiny
 That her thick mask turns crystal to
 let through
 The unsuspecting eyes of honesty ;
 But Margaret's heart was too sincere
 and true
 Aught but plain truth and faithfulness
 to see,
 And Mordred's for a time a little grew
 To be like hers, won by the mild reproof
 Of those kind eyes that kept all doubt
 aloof.

V.

Full oft they meet, as dawn and twilight
 meet
 In northern chasms ; she full of grow-
 ing day

As he of darkness, which before her feet
 Shrank gradual, and faded quite away,
 Soon to return ; for power had made
 love sweet
 To him, and, when his will had
 gained full sway,
 The taste began to pall ; for never power
 Cansate the hungry soul beyond an hour.

VI.

He fell as doth the tempter ever fall,
 Even in the gaining of his loathsome
 end ;
 God doth not work as man works, but
 makes all
 The crooked paths of ill to goodness
 tend ;
 Let him judge Margaret ! If to be the
 thrall
 Of love, and faith too generous to
 defend
 Its very life from him she loved, be sin,
 What hope of grace may the seducer
 win ?

VII.

Grim-hearted world, that look'st with
 Levite eyes
 On those poor fallen by too much
 faith in man,
 She that upon thy freezing threshold
 lies,
 Starved to more sinning by thy sav-
 age ban, —
 Seeking that refuge because foulest vice
 More godlike than thy virtue is,
 whose span
 Shuts out the wretched only, — is more
 free
 To enter Heaven than thou wilt ever
 be !

VIII.

Thou wilt not let her wash thy dainty
 feet
 With such salt things as tears, or
 with rude hair
 Dry them, soft Pharisee, that sit'st at
 meat
 With him who made her such, and
 speak'st him fair,
 Leaving God's wandering lamb the
 while to bleat
 Unheeded, shivering in the pitiless
 air :

Thou hast made prisoned virtue show
 more wan
 And haggard than a vice to look upon.

IX.

Now many months flew by, and weary
 grew
 To Margaret the sight of happy
 things ;
 Blight fell on all her flowers, instead
 of dew :
 Shut round her heart were now the
 joyous wings
 Wherewith it wont to soar ; yet not
 untrue,
 Though tempted much, her woman's
 nature clings
 To its first pure belief, and with sad
 eyes
 Looks backward o'er the gate of Para-
 dise.

X.

And so, though altered Mordred came
 less oft,
 And winter frowned where spring
 had laughed before,
 In his strange eyes, yet half her sad-
 ness doffed,
 And in her silent patience loved him
 more :
 Sorrow had made her soft heart yet
 more soft,
 And a new life within her own she
 bore
 Which made her tenderer, as she felt
 it move
 Beneath her breast, a refuge for her
 love.

XI.

This babe, she thought, would surely
 bring him back,
 And be a bond forever them between ;
 Before its eyes the sullen tempest-rack
 Would fade, and leave the face of
 heaven serene :
 And love's return doth more than fill
 the lack,
 Which in his absence withered the
 heart's green :
 And yet a dim foreboding still would
 flit
 Between her and her hope to darken it.

XII.

She could not figure forth a happy fate,
 Even for this life from heaven so
 newly come ;
 The earth must needs be doubly deso-
 late
 To him scarce parted from a fairer
 home :
 Such boding heavier on her bosom sate
 One night, as, standing in the twi-
 light gloam,
 She strained her eyes beyond that dizzy
 verge
 At whose foot faintly breaks the future's
 surge.

XIII.

Poor little spirit ! naught but shame
 and woe
 Nurse the sick heart whose lifeblood
 nurses thine :
 Yet not those only : love hath tri-
 umphed so,
 As for thy sake makes sorrow more
 divine :
 And yet, though thou be pure, the world
 is foe
 To purity, if born in such a shrine :
 And, having trampled it for struggling
 thence,
 Smiles to itself, and calls it Providence.

XIV.

As thus she mused, a shadow seemed
 to rise
 From out her thought, and turn to
 dreariness
 All blissful hopes and sunny memories,
 And the quick blood would curdle up
 and press
 About her heart, which seemed to shut
 its eyes
 And hush itself, as who with shud-
 dering guess
 Harks through the gloom and dreads
 e'en now to feel
 Through his hot breast the icy slide of
 steel.

XV.

But, at that heart-beat, while in dread
 she was,
 In the low wind the honeysuckles
 gleam,

A dewy thrill flits through the heavy
 grass,
 And, looking forth, she saw, as in a
 dream,
 Within the wood the moonlight's shad-
 ovy mass:
 Night's stary heart yearning to hers
 doth seem,
 And the deep sky, full-hearted with the
 moon,
 Folds round her all the happiness of
 June.

XVI.

What fear could face a heaven and earth
 like this?
 What silveriest cloud could hang
 'neath such a sky?
 A tide of wondrous and unwonted bliss
 Rolls back through all her pulses
 suddenly,
 As if some seraph, who had learned to
 kiss
 From the fair daughters of the world
 gone by,
 Had wedded so his fallen light with
 hers,
 Such sweet, strange joy through soul
 and body stirs.

XVII.

Now seek we Mordred: he who did
 not fear
 The crime, yet fears the latent con-
 sequence:
 If it should reach a brother Templar's
 ear,
 It haply might be made a good pre-
 tence
 To cheat him of the hope he held most
 dear:
 For he had spared no thought's or
 deed's expense,
 That, by and by might help his wish to
 clip
 Its darling bride,—the high grand-
 mastership.

XVIII.

The apathy, ere a crime resolved is
 done,
 Is scarce less dreadful than remorse
 for crime:

By no allurement can the soul be
 won
 From brooding o'er the weary creep
 of time:
 Mordred stole forth into the happy
 sun,
 Striving to hum a scrap of Breton
 rhyme,
 But the sky struck him speechless, and
 he tried
 In vain to summon up his callous
 pride.

XIX.

In the courtyard a fountain leaped al-
 way,
 A Triton blowing jewels through his
 shell
 Into the sunshine; Mordred turned
 away,
 Weary because the stone face did not
 tell
 Of weariness, nor could he bear to-day,
 Heartsick, to hear the patient sink
 and swell
 Of winds among the leaves, or golden
 bees
 Drowsily humming in the orange-trees.

XX.

All happy sights and sounds now came
 to him
 Like a reproach: he wandered far
 and wide,
 Following the lead of his unquiet whim,
 But still there went a something at
 his side
 That made the cool breeze hot, the
 sunshine dim;
 It would not flee, it could not be defied,
 He could not see it, but he felt it there,
 By the damp chill that crept among
 his hair.

XXI.

Day wore at last: the evening star
 arose,
 And throbbing in the sky grew red
 and set;
 Then with a guilty, wavering step he
 goes
 To the hid nook where they so oft
 had met

In happier season, for his heart well
knows

That he is sure to find poor Margaret
Watching and waiting there with love-
lorn breast
Around her young dream's rudely
scattered nest.

XXII.

Why follow here that grim old chronicle
Which counts the dagger-strokes and
drops of blood?

Enough that Margaret by his mad steel
fell,

Unmoved by murder from her trust-
ing mood,

Smiling on him as Heaven smiles on
Hell,

With a sad love, remembering when
he stood

Not fallen yet, the unsealer of her heart,
Of all her holy dreams the holiest part.

XXIII.

His crime complete, scarce knowing
what he did,

(So goes the tale,) beneath the altar
there

In the high church the stiffening corpse
he hid,

And then, to 'scape that suffocating air,
Like a scared ghoul out of the porch
he slid;

But his strained eyes saw bloodspots
everywhere,

And ghastly faces thrust themselves
between

His soul and hopes of peace with blast-
ing mien.

XXIV.

His heart went out within him like a
spark

Dropt in the sea; wherever he made
bold

To turn his eyes, he saw, all stiff and stark,
Pale Margaret lying dead; the lavish
gold

Of her loose hair seemed in the cloudy
dark

To spread a glory, and a thousand-
fold

More strangely pale and beautiful she
grew:

Her silence stabbed his conscience
through and through:

XXV.

Or visions of past days,—a mother's eyes
That smiled down on the fair boy at
her knee,

Whose happy upturned face to hers
replies,—

He saw sometimes; or Margaret
mournfully

Gazed on him full of doubt, as one who
tries

To crush belief that does love injury;
Then she would wring her hands, but
soon again

Love's patience glimmered out through
cloudy pain.

XXVI.

Meanwhile he dared not go and steal
away

The silent, dead-cold witness of his
sin;

He had not feared the life, but that dull
clay,

Those open eyes that showed the
death within,

Would surely stare him mad; yet all
the day

A dreadful impulse, whence his will
could win

No refuge, made him linger in the aisle,
Freezing with his wan look each greet-
ing smile.

XXVII.

Now, on the second day there was to be
A festival in church: from far and
near

Came flocking in the sunburnt peas-
antry,

And knights and dames with stately
antique cheer,

Blazing with pomp, as if all faërie
Had emptied her quaint halls, or, as

it were,

The illuminated marge of some old book,
While we were gazing, life and motion
took.

XXVIII.

When all were entered, and the roving
 eyes
 Of all were stayed, some upon faces
 bright,
 Some on the priests, some on the trceries
 That decked the slumber of a marble
 knight,
 And all the rustlings over that arise
 From recognizing tokens of delight,
 When friendly glances meet, — then
 silent ease
 Spread o'er the multitude by slow de-
 grees.

XXIX.

Then swelled the organ : up through
 choir and nave
 The music trembled with an inward
 thrill
 Of bliss at its own grandeur : wave on
 wave
 Its flood of mellow thunder rose, until
 The hushed air shivered with the throb
 it gave,
 Then, poising for a moment, it stood
 still,
 And sank and rose again, to burst in spray
 That wandered into silence far away.

XXX.

Like to a mighty heart the music seemed,
 That yearns with melodies it cannot
 speak,
 Until, in grand despair of what it
 dreamed,
 In the agony of effort it doth break,
 Yet triumphs breaking ; on it rushed
 and streamed
 And wanted in its might, as when
 a lake,
 Long pent among the mountains, bursts
 its walls
 And in one crowding gush leaps forth
 and falls.

XXXI.

Deeper and deeper shudders shook the
 air,
 As the huge bass kept gathering
 heavily,
 Like thunder when it rouses in its lair,
 And with its hoarse growl shakes the
 low-hung sky,

It grew up like a darkness everywhere,
 Filling the vast cathedral ; — sud-
 denly,
 From the dense mass a boy's clear
 treble broke
 Like lightning, and the full-toned choir
 awoke.

XXXII.

Through gorgeous windows shone the
 sun aslant,
 Brimming the church with gold and
 purple mist,
 Meet atmosphere to bosom that rich
 chant,
 Where fifty voices in one strand did
 twist,
 Their varicolored tones, and left no want
 To the delighted soul, which sank
 abyssed
 In the warm music cloud, while, far
 below,
 The organ heaved its surges to and fro.

XXXIII.

As if a lark should suddenly drop dead
 While the blue air yet trembled with
 its song,
 So snapped at once that music's golden
 thread,
 Struck by a nameless fear that leapt
 along
 From heart to heart, and like a shadow
 spread
 With instantaneous shiver through
 the throng,
 So that some glanced behind, as half
 aware
 A hideous shape of dread were stand-
 ing there.

XXXIV.

As when a crowd of pale men gather
 round,
 Watching an eddy in the leaden deep,
 From which they deem the body of one
 drowned
 Will be cast forth, from face to face
 doth creep
 An eager dread that holds all tongues
 fast bound
 Until the horror, with a ghastly leap,

Starts up, its dead blue arms stretched
 a'instlessly,
 Heaved with the swinging of the care-
 less sea, —

XXXV.

So in the faces of all these there grew,
 As by one impulse, a dark, freezing
 awe,
 Which, with a fearful fascination drew
 All eyes toward the altar; damp and
 raw
 The air grew suddenly, and no man
 knew
 Whether perchance his silent neigh-
 bor saw
 The dreadful thing which all were sure
 would rise
 To scare the strained lids wider from
 their eyes.

XXXVI.

The incense trembled as it upward sent
 Its slow, uncertain thread of wander-
 ing blue,
 As 't were the only living element
 In all the church, so deep the still-
 ness grew ;
 It seemed one might have heard it, as
 it went,
 Give out an audible rustle, curling
 through
 The midnight silence of that awe-struck
 air,
 More hushed than death, though so
 much life was there.

XXXVII.

Nothing they saw, but a low voice was
 heard
 Threading the ominous silence of
 that fear,
 Gentle and terrorless as if a bird,
 Wakened by some volcano's glare,
 should cheer
 The murk air with his song; yet every
 word
 In the cathedral's farthest arch seemed
 near,
 As if it spoke to every one apart,
 Like the clear voice of conscience in
 each heart.

XXXVIII.

“ O Rest, to weary hearts thou art most
 dear !
 O Silence, after life's bewildering din,
 Thou art most welcome, whether in the
 sear
 Days of our age thou comest, or we
 win
 Thy poppy-wreath in youth ! then
 wherefore here
 Linger I yet, once free to enter in
 At that wished gate which gentle
 Death doth ope,
 Into the boundless realm of strength
 and hope ?

XXXIX.

“ Think not in death my love could
 ever cease ;
 If thou wast false, more need there
 is for me
 Still to be true ; that slumber were no
 peace,
 If 't were unvisited with dreams of
 thee ;
 And thou hadst never heard such words
 as these,
 Save that in heaven I must ever be
 Most comfortless and wretched, seeing
 this
 Our unbaptizèd babe shut out from bliss.

XL.

“ This little sprit with imploring eyes
 Wanders alone the dreary wild of
 space ;
 The shadow of his pain forever lies
 Upon my soul in this new dwelling-
 place ;
 His loneliness makes me in Paradise
 More lonely, and, unless I see his
 face,
 Even here for grief could I lie down
 and die,
 Save for my curse of immortality.

XLI.

“ World after world he sees around him
 swim
 Crowded with happy souls, that take
 no heed

Of the sad eyes that from the night's
faint rim
Gaze sick with longing on them as
they speed
With golden gates, that only shut out
him :
And shapes sometimes from Hell's
abysses freed
Flap darkly by him, with enormous
sweep
Of wings that roughen wide the pitchy
deep.

XLII.

"I am a mother, — spirits do not shake
This much of earth from them, —
and I must pine
Till I can feel his little hands, and take
His weary head upon this heart of
mine ;
And, might it be, full gladly for his
sake
Would I this solitude of bliss resign,
And be shut out of Heaven to dwell
with him
Forever in that silence drear and dim.

XLIII.

"I strove to hush my soul, and would
not speak
At first, for thy dear sake ; a woman's
love
Is mighty, but a mother's heart is weak,
And by its weakness overcomes ; I
strove
To smother bitter thoughts with pa-
tience meek,
But still in the abyss my soul would
rove,
Seeking my child, and drove me here
to claim
The rite that gives him peace in Christ's
dear name.

XLIV.

"I sit and weep while blessed spirits
sing ;
I can but long and pine the while they
praise,
And, leaning o'er the wall of Heaven,
I fling
My voice to where I deem my infant
strays,

Like a robbed bird that cries in vain to
bring
Her nestlings back beneath her wings'
embrace ;
But still he answers not, and I but know
That Heaven and earth are both alike
in woe."

XLV.

Then the pale priests, with ceremony
due,
Baptized the child within its dread-
ful tomb
Beneath that mother's heart, whose in-
stinct true
Star-like had battled down the triple
gloom
Of sorrow, love, and death : young
maidens, too,
Strewed the pale corpse with many
a milkwhite bloom,
And parted the bright hair, and on the
breast
Crossed the unconscious hands in sign
of rest.

XLVI.

Some said, that, when the priest had
sprinkled o'er
The consecrated drops, they seemed
to hear
A sigh, as of some heart from travail
sore
Released, and then two voices sing-
ing clear,
Misereatur Deus, more and more
Fading far upward, and their ghastly
fear
Fell from them with that sound, as
bodies fall
From souls upspringing to celestial hall.

PROMETHEUS.

ONE after one the stars have risen
and set,
Sparkling upon the hoarfrost on my
chain :
The Bear, that prowled all night about
the fold

Of the North-star, hath shrunk into
 his den,
 Scared by the blithesome footsteps of
 the Dawn,
 Whose blushing smile floods all the
 Orient ;
 And now bright Lucifer grows less and
 less,
 Into the heaven's blue quiet deep-with-
 drawn.
 Sunless and starless all, the desert sky
 Arches above me, empty as this heart
 For ages hath been empty of all joy,
 Except to brood upon its silent hope,
 As o'er its hope of day the sky doth
 now.
 All night have I heard voices : deeper
 yet
 The deep low breathing of the silence
 grew,
 While all about, muffled in awe, there
 stood
 Shadows, or forms, or both, clear-felt
 at heart,
 But, when I turned to front them, far
 along
 Only a shudder through the midnight
 ran,
 And the dense stillness walled me
 closer round.
 But still I heard them wander up and
 down
 That solitude, and flappings of dusk
 wings
 Did mingle with them, whether of
 those hags
 Let slip upon me once from Hades deep,
 Or of yet direr torments, if such be,
 I could but guess ; and then toward me
 came
 A shape as of a woman : very pale
 It was, and calm ; its cold eyes did not
 move,
 And mine moved not, but only stared
 on them.
 Their fixed awe went through my brain
 like ice ;
 A skeleton hand seemed clutching at
 my heart,
 And a sharp chill, as if a dank night
 fog
 Suddenly closed me in, was all I felt :
 And then, methought, I heard a freez-
 ing sigh,

A long, deep, shivering sigh, as from
 blue lips
 Stiffening in death, close to mine ear
 I thought
 Some doom was close upon me, and I
 looked
 And saw the red moon through the
 heavy mist,
 Just setting, and it seemed as it wer.
 falling,
 Or reeling to its fall, so dim and dead
 And palsy-struck it looked. Then all
 sounds merged
 Into the rising surges of the pines,
 Which, leagues below me, clothing the
 gaunt loins
 Of ancient Caucasus with hairystrength,
 Sent up a murmur in the morning
 wind,
 Sad as the wail that from the populous
 earth
 All day and night to high Olympus
 soars,
 Fit incense to thy wicked throne, O
 Jove !

Thy hated name is tossed once more
 in scorn
 From off my lips, for I will tell thy
 doom.
 And are these tears ? Nay, do not tri-
 umph, Jove !
 They are wrong from me but by the
 agonies
 Of prophecy, like those sparse drops
 which fall
 From clouds in travail of the lightning,
 when
 The great wave of the storm high-
 curled and black
 Rolls steadily onward to its thunderous
 break.
 Why art thou made a god of, thou poor
 type
 Of anger, and revenge, and cunning
 force ?
 True Power was never born of brutish
 Strength,
 Nor sweet Truth suckled at the shaggy
 dugs
 Of that old she-wolf. Are thy thunder-
 bolts,
 That quell the darkness for a space, so
 strong

As the prevailing patience of meek
 Light,
 Who, with the invincible tenderness
 of peace,
 Wins it to be a portion of herself?
 Why art thou made a god of, thou, who
 hast
 The never-sleeping terror at thy heart,
 That birthright of all tyrants, worse to
 bear
 Than this thy ravening bird on which
 I smile?
 Thou swear'st to free me, if I will un-
 fold
 What kind of doom it is whose omen
 flits
 Across thy heart, as o'er a troop of
 doves
 The fearful shadow of the kite. What
 need
 To know that truth whose knowledge
 cannot save?
 Evil its errand hath, as well as Good ;
 When thine is finished, thou art known
 no more :
 There is a higher purity than thou,
 And higher purity is greater strength ;
 Thy nature is thy doom, at which thy
 heart
 Trembles behind the thick wall of thy
 might.
 Let man but hope, and thou art straight-
 way chilled
 With thought of that drear silence and
 deep night
 Which, like a dream, shall swallow thee
 and thine :
 Let man but will, and thou art god no
 more,
 More capable of ruin than the gold
 And ivory that image thee on earth.
 He who hurled down the monstrous
 Titan-brood
 Blinded with lightnings, with rough
 thunders stunned,
 Is weaker than a simple human thought.
 My slender voice can shake thee, as the
 breeze,
 That seems but apt to stir a maiden's
 hair,
 Sways huge Oceanus from pole to pole :
 For I am still Prometheus, and fore-
 know
 In my wise heart the end and doom of all.

Yes, I am still Prometheus, wiser
 grown
 By years of solitude, — that holds apart
 The past and future, giving the soul
 room
 To search into itself, — and long com-
 mune
 With this eternal silence ; — more a
 god,
 In my long-suffering and strength to
 meet
 With equal front the direst shafts of
 fate,
 Than thou in thy faint-hearted despot-
 ism,
 Girt with thy baby-toys of force and
 wrath.
 Yes, I am that Prometheus who brought
 down
 The light to man, which thou, in selfish
 fear,
 Hadst to thyself usurped, — his by sole
 right,
 For Man hath right to all save Tyr-
 anny, —
 And which shall free him yet from thy
 frail throne.
 Tyrants are but the spawn of Igno-
 rance,
 Begotten by the slaves they trample on,
 Who, could they win a glimmer of the
 light,
 And see that Tyranny is always weak-
 ness,
 Or Fear with its own bosom ill at ease,
 Would laugh away in scorn the sand-
 wove chain
 Which their own blindness feigned for
 adamant.
 Wrong ever builds on quicksands, but
 the Right
 To the firm centre lays its moveless
 base.
 The tyrant trembles, if the air but stirs
 The innocent ringlets of a child's free
 hair,
 And crouches, when the thought of
 some great spirit,
 With world-wide murmur, like a rising
 gale,
 Over men's hearts, as over standing
 corn,
 Rushes, and bends them to its own
 strong will.

So shall some thought of mine yet circle earth,
And puff away thy crumbling altars,
Jove !

And, wouldst thou know of my supreme revenge,
Poor tyrant, even now dethroned in heart,
Realmless in soul, as tyrants ever are,
Listen ! and tell me if this bitter peak,
This never-glutted vulture, and these chains

Shrink not before it ; for it shall befit
A sorrow-taught, unconquered Titan-heart.

Men, when their death is on them, seem to stand

On a precipitous crag that overhangs
The abyss of doom, and in that depth to see,

As in a glass, the features dim and vast
Of things to come, the shadows, as it seems,

Of what have been. Death ever fronts the wise ;

Not fearfully, but with clear promises
Of larger life, on whose broad vans upborne,

Their outlook widens, and they see beyond

The horizon of the Present and the Past,
Even to the very source and end of things.

Such am I now : immortal woe hath made
My heart a seer, and my soul a judge
Between the substance and the shadow of Truth.

The sure supremeness of the Beautiful,
By all the martyrdoms made doubly sure

Of such as I am, this is my revenge,
Which of my wrongs builds a triumphal arch,

Through which I see a sceptre and a throne.

The pipings of glad shepherds on the hills,

Tending the flocks no more to bleed for thee, —

The songs of maidens pressing with white feet

The vintage on thine altars poured no more, —

The murmurous bliss of lovers, underneath

Dim grapevine bowers, whose rosy bunches press

Not half so closely their warm cheeks, unpaled

By thoughts of thy brute lust, — the hive-like hum

Of peaceful commonwealths, where sunburnt Toil

Reaps for itself the rich earth made its own

By its own labor, lightened with glad hymns

To an omnipotence which thy mad bolts
Would cope with as a spark with the

vast sea, —
Even the spirit of free love and peace,

Duty's sure recompense through life and death, —

These are such harvests as all master-spirits

Reap, haply not on earth, but reap no less
Because the sheaves are bound by hands

not theirs ;
These are the bloodless daggers where-

withal
They stab fallen tyrants, this their high

revenge :
For their best part of life on earth is when,

Long after death, prisoned and pent no more,

Their thoughts, their wild dreams even, have become

Part of the necessary air men breathe ;
When, like the moon, herself behind a

cloud,
They shed down light before us on life's

sea,
That cheers us to steer onward still in

hope.
Earth with her twining memories ivies

o'er
Their holy sepulchres ; the chainless

sea,
In tempest or wide calm, repeats their

thoughts ;
The lightning and the thunder, all free

things,
Have legends of them for the ears of men.

All other glories are as falling stars,
But universal Nature watches theirs :

Such strength is won by love of human kind.

Not that I feel that hunger after fame,
Which souls of a half-greatness are
beset with ;
But that the memory of noble deeds
Cries shame upon the idle and the vile,
And keeps the heart of Man forever up
To the heroic level of old time.
To be forgot at first is little pain
To a heart conscious of such high intent
As must be deathless on the lips of
men ;
But, having been a name, to sink and be
A something which the world can do
without,
Which, having been or not, would
never change
The lightest pulse of fate, — this is indeed
A cup of bitterness the worst to taste,
And this thy heart shall empty to the
dregs.
Endless despair shall be thy Caucasus,
And memory thy vulture ; thou wilt find
Oblivion far lonelier than this peak, —
Behold thy destiny ! Thou think'st it
much
That I should brave thee, miserable
god !
But I have braved a mightier than
thou,
Even the tempting of this soaring heart,
Which might have made me, scarcely
less than thou,
A god among my brethren weak and
blind, —
Scarce less than thou, a pitiable thing
To be down-trodden into darkness
soon.
But now I am above thee, for thou art
The bungling workmanship of fear, the
block
That awes the swart Barbarian ; but I
Am what myself have made, — a nature
wise
With finding in itself the types of all, —
With watching from the dim verge of
the time
What things to beare visible in the gleams
Thrown forward on them from the
luminous past, —
Wise with the history of its own frail heart,
With reverence and sorrow, and with
love,
Broad as the world, for freedom and for
man.

Thou and all strength shall crumble,
except Love,
By whom, and for whose glory, ye shall
cease :
And, when thou art but a dim moaning
heard
From out the pitiless glooms of Chaos, I
Shall be a power and a memory,
A name to fright all tyrants with, a light
Unsetting as the pole-star, a great voice
Heard in the breathless pauses of the fight
By truth and freedom ever waged with
wrong,
Clear as a silver trumpet, to awake
Huge echoes that from age to age live on
In kindred spirits, giving them a sense
Of boundless power from boundless
suffering wrong :
And many a glazing eye shall smile to see
The memory of my triumph (for to meet
Wrong with endurance, and to overcome
The present with a heart that looks
beyond,
Are triumph), like a propheteagle, perch
Upon the sacred banner of the Right.
Evil springs up, and flowers, and bears
no seed,
And feeds the green earth with its swift
decay,
Leaving it richer for the growth of truth ;
But Good, once put in action or in
thought,
Like a strong oak, doth from its boughs
shed down
The ripe germs of a forest. Thou,
weak god,
Shalt fade and be forgotten ! but this soul,
Fresh-living still in the serene abyss,
In every heaving shall partake, that grows
From heart to heart among the sons of
men, —
As the ominous hum before the earth-
quake runs
Far through the Ægean from roused
isle to isle, —
Foreboding wreck to palaces and shrines,
And mighty rents in many a cavernous
error
That darkens the free light to man : —
This heart,
Unscarred by thy grim vulture, as the
truth
Grows but more lovely 'neath the beaks
and claws

Of Harpies blind that fain would soil it,
shall

In all the throbbing exultations share
That wait on freedom's triumphs, and
in all

The glorious agonies of martyr-spirits, —
Sharp lightning-throes to split the
jagged clouds

That veil the future, showing them the
end, —

Pain's thorny crown for constancy and
truth,

Girding the temples like a wreath of stars.
This is a thought, that, like the fabled
laurel,

Makes my faith thunder-proof; and thy
dread bolts

Fall on me like the silent flakes of snow
On the hoar brows of aged Caucasus :

But, O thought far more blissful, they
can rend

This cloud of flesh, and make my soul
a star!

Unleash thy crouching thunders now,
O Jove!

Free this high heart, which, a poor
captive long,

Doth knock to be let forth, this heart
which still,

In its invincible manhood, overtops
Thy puny godship, as this mountain
doth

The pines that moss its roots. O, even
now,

While from my peak of suffering I look
down,

Beholding with a far-spread gush of
hope

The sunrise of that Beauty, in whose
face,

Shone all around with love, no man
shall look

But straightway like a god he is uplift
Unto the throne long empty for his
sake,

And clearly oft foreshadowed in wide
dreams

By his free inward nature, which nor
thou,

Nor any anarch after thee, can bind
From working its great doom, — now,
now set free

This essence, not to die, but to become

Part of that awful Presence which doth
haunt

The palaces of tyrants, to hunt off,
With its grim eyes and fearful whisper-
ings

And hideous sense of utter loneliness,
All hope of safety, all desire of peace,
All but the loathed forefeeling of blank
death, —

Part of that spirit which doth ever brood
In patient calm on the unpillered nest

Of man's deep heart, till mighty
thoughts grow fledged

To sail with darkening shadow o'er
the world,

Filling with dread such souls as dare
not trust

In the unfailing energy of Good,
Until they swoop, and their pale quarry
make

Of some o'erbloated wrong, — that
spirit which

Scatters great hopes in the seed-field
of man,

Like acorns among grain, to grow and
be

A roof for freedom in all coming time!

But no, this cannot be; for ages yet,
In solitude unbroken, shall I hear

The angry Caspian to the Euxine shout.
And Euxine answer with a muffled roar,

On either side storming the giant walls
Of Caucasus with leagues of climbing
foam

(Less, from my height, than flakes of
downy snow,

That draw back baffled but to hurl again,
Snatched up in wrath and horrible tur-
moil,

Mountain on mountain, as the Titans
erst,

My brethren, scaling the high seat of
Jove,

Heaved Pelion upon Ossa's shoulders
broad

In vain emprise. The moon will come
and go

With her monotonous vicissitude;
Once beautiful, when I was free to walk
Among my fellows, and to interchange
The influence benign of loving eyes,
But now by aged use grown wear-
some: —

False thought! most false! for how
 could I endure
 These crawling centuries of lonely woe
 Unshamed by weak complaining, but
 for thee,
 Loneliest, save me, of all created things,
 Mild-eyed Astarte, my best comforter,
 With thy pale smile of sad benignity?

Year after year will pass away and
 seem

To me, in mine eternal agony,
 But as the shadows of dumb summer
 clouds,

Which I have watched so often darken-
 ing o'er

The vast Sarmatian plain, league-wide
 at first,

But, with still swiftness, lessening on
 and on

Till cloud and shadow meet and mingle
 where

The gray horizon fades into the sky,
 Far, far to northward. Yes, for ages
 yet

Must I lie here upon my altar huge,
 A sacrifice for man. Sorrow will be,
 As it hath been, his portion; endless
 doom,

While the immortal with the mortal
 linked

Dreams of its wings and pines for what
 it dreams,

With upward yearn unceasing. Better
 so:

For wisdom is meek sorrow's patient
 child,

And empire over self, and all the
 deep

Strong charities that make men seem
 like gods;

And love, that makes them be gods,
 from her breasts

Sucks in the milk that makes mankind
 one blood.

Good never comes unmix'd, or so it
 seems,

Having two faces, as some images
 Are carved, of foolish gods; one face
 is ill;

But one heart lies beneath, and that is
 good,

As are all hearts, when we explore their
 depths.

Therefore, great heart, bear up! thou
 art but type

Of what all lofty spirits endure, that
 fain

Would win men back to strength and
 peace through love:

Each hath his lonely peak, and on each
 heart

Envy, or scorn, or hatred, tears lifelong
 With vulture beak; yet the high soul
 is left;

And faith, which is but hope grown
 wise; and love

And patience, which at last shall over-
 come.

1843.

SONG.

VIOLET! sweet violet!

Thine eyes are full of tears;

Are they wet

Even yet

With the thought of other years?

Or with gladness are they full,

For the night so beautiful,

And longing for those far-off spheres?

Loved one of my youth thou wast,

Of my merry youth,

And I see,

Tearfully,

All the fair and sunny past,

All its openness and truth,

Ever fresh and green in thee

As the moss is in the sea.

Thy little heart, that hath with love

Grown colored like the sky above,

On which thou lookest ever, —

Can it know

All the woe

Of hope for what returneth never,

All the sorrow and the longing

To these hearts of ours belonging?

Out on it! no foolish pining

For the sky

Dims thine eye,

Or for the stars so calmly shining;

Like thee let this soul of mine

Take hue from that wherefor I long,

Self-stayed and high, serene and strong,
Not satisfied with hoping — but divine.

Violet ! dear violet !

Thy blue eyes are only wet
With joy and love of Him who sent thee,
And for the fulfilling sense
Of that glad obedience
Which made thee all that Nature meant
thee !

1841.

ROSALINE.

THOU look'dst on me all yesternight,
Thine eyes were blue, thy hair was bright
As when we murmured our troth-pledge
Beneath the thick stars, Rosaline !
Thy hair was braided on thy head,
As on the day we two were wed,
Mine eyes scarce knew if thou wert
dead, —
But my shrunk heart knew, Rosaline !

The death-watch ticked behind the wall,
The blackness rustled like a pall,
The moaning wind did rise and fall
Among the bleak pines, Rosaline !
My heart beat thickly in mine ears :
The lids may shut out fleshly fears,
But still the spirit sees and hears, —
Its eyes are lidless, Rosaline !

A wildness rushing suddenly,
A knowing some ill shape is nigh,
A wish for death, a fear to die, —
Is not this vengeance, Rosaline ?
A loneliness that is not lone,
A love quite withered up and gone,
A strong soul trampled from its throne, —
What wouldst thou further, Rosaline ?

'Tis drear such moonless nights as these,
Strange sounds are out upon the breeze,
And the leaves shiver in the trees,
And then thou comest, Rosaline !
I seem to hear the mourners go,
With long black garments trailing slow,
And plumes anodding to and fro,
As once I heard them, Rosaline !

Thy shroud is all of snowy white,
And, in the middle of the night,
Thou standest moveless and upright,

Gazing upon me, Rosaline !
There is no sorrow in thine eyes,
But evermore that meek surprise, —
O God ! thy gentle spirit tries
To deem me guiltless, Rosaline !

Above thy grave the robin sings,
And swarms of bright and happy things
Flit all about with sunlit wings, —
But I am cheerless, Rosaline !
The violets on the hillock toss,
The gravestone is o'ergrown with moss ;
For nature feels not any loss, —
But I am cheerless, Rosaline !

I did not know when thou wast dead ;
A blackbird whistling overhead
Thrilled through my brain ; I would
have fled,
But dar'd not leave thee, Rosaline !
The sun rolled down, and very soon,
Like a great fire, the awful moon
Rose, stained with blood, and then a
swoon
Crept chilly o'er me, Rosaline !

The stars came out ; and, one by one,
Each angel from his silver throne
Looked down and saw what I had done :
I dared not hide me, Rosaline !
I crouched ; I feared thy corpse would cry
Against me to God's quiet sky,
I thought I saw the blue lips try
To utter something, Rosaline !

I waited with a maddened grin
To hear that voice all icy thin
Slide forth and tell my deadly sin
To hell and heaven, Rosaline !
But no voice came, and then it seemed,
That, if the very corpse had screamed,
The sound like sunshine glad had
streamed
Through that dark stillness, Rosaline !

And then, amid the silent night,
I screamed with horrible delight,
And in my brain an awful light
Did seem to crackle, Rosaline !
It is my curse ! sweet memories fall
From me like snow, — and only all
Of that one night, like cold worms, crawl
My doomed heart over, Rosaline !

Why wilt thou haunt me with thine eyes,
Wherein such blessed memories,
Such pitying forgiveness lies,
Than hate more bitter, Rosaline?
Woe's me! I know that love so high
As thine, true soul, could never die,
And with mean clay in churchyard lie, —
Would it might be so, Rosaline!

1841.

THE SHEPHERD OF KING ADMETUS.

THERE came a youth upon the earth,
Some thousand years ago,
Whose slender hands were nothing
worth,
Whether to plough, or reap, or sow.

Upon an empty tortoise-shell
He stretched some chords, and drew
Music that made men's bosoms swell
Fearless, or brimmed their eyes with
dew.

Then King Admetus, one who had
Pure taste by right divine,
Decreed his singing not too bad
To hear between the cups of wine:

And so, well pleased with being soothed
Into a sweet half-sleep,
Three times his kingly beard he
smoothed,
And made him viceroy o'er his sheep.

His words were simple words enough,
And yet he used them so,
That what in other mouths was rough
in his seemed musical and low.

Men called him but a shiftless youth,
In whom no good they saw;
And yet, unwittingly, in truth,
They made his careless words their law.

They knew not how he learned at all,
For idly, hour by hour,
He sat and watched the dead leaves fall,
Or mused upon a common flower.

It seemed the loveliness of things
Did teach him all their use,

For, in mere weeds, and stones, and
springs,
He found a healing power profuse.

Men granted that his speech was wise,
But, when a glance they caught
Of his slim grace and woman's eyes,
They laughed, and called him good-for-
naught.

Yet after he was dead and gone,
And e'en his memory dim,
Earth seemed more sweet to live upon,
More full of love, because of him.

And day by day more holy grew
Each spot where he had trod,
Till after-poets only knew
Their first-born brother as a god.

1842.

THE TOKEN.

It is a mere wild rosebud,
Quite fallow now, and dry,
Yet there's something wondrous in it, —
Some gleams of days gone by, —
Dear sights and sounds that are to me
The very moons of memory,
And stir my heart's blood far below
Its short-lived waves of joy and woe.

Lips must fade and roses wither,
All sweet times be o'er, —
They only smile, and, murmuring
"Thither!"

Stay with us no more:
And yet oft-times a look or smile,
Forgotten in a kiss's while,
Years after from the dark will start,
And flash across the trembling heart.

Thou hast given me many roses,
But never one, like this,
O'erfloods both sense and spirit
With such a deep, wild bliss;
We must have instincts that glean up
Sparse drops of this life in the cup,
Whose taste shall give us all that we
Can prove of immortality.

Earth's stablest things are shadows,
And, in the light of time,

Haply some chance-saved trifle
 May tell of this old home :
 As now sometimes we seem to find,
 In a dark crevice of the mind,
 Some relic, which, long pondered o'er,
 Hints faintly at a life before.



AN INCIDENT IN A RAILROAD CAR.

HE spoke of Burns: men rude and
 rough
 Pressed round to hear the praise of one
 Whose heart was made of manly, simple
 stuff,
 As homespun as their own.

And, when he read, they forward
 leaned,
 Drinking, with thirsty hearts and ears,
 His brook-like songs whom glory never
 weaned
 From humble smiles and tears.

Slowly there grew a tender awe,
 Sun-like, o'er faces brown and hard,
 As if in him who read they felt and saw
 Some presence of the bard.

It was a sight for sin and wrong
 And slavish tyranny to see,
 A sight to make our faith more pure and
 strong
 In high humanity.

I thought, these men will carry hence
 Promptings their former life above,
 And something of a finer reverence
 For beauty, truth, and love.

God scatters love on every side,
 Freely among his children all,
 And always hearts are lying open wide,
 Wherein some grains may fall.

There is no wind but soweth seeds
 Of a more true and open life,
 Which burst, unlooked for, into high-
 souled deeds,
 With wayside beauty rife.

We find within these souls of ours
 Some wild germs of a higher birth,
 Which in the poet's tropic heart bear
 flowers
 Whose fragrance fills the earth.

Within the hearts of all men lie
 These promises of wider bliss,
 Which blossom into hopes that cannot
 die,
 In sunny hours like this.

All that hath been majestic
 In life or death, since time began,
 Is native in the simple heart of all,
 The angel heart of man.

And thus, among the untaught poor,
 Great deeds and feelings find a home,
 That cast in shadow all the golden lore
 Of classic Greece and Rome.

O, mighty brother-soul of man,
 Where'er thou art, in low or high,
 Thy skyey arches with exulting span
 O'er-roof infinity !

All thoughts that mould the age begin
 Deep down within the primitive soul,
 And from the many slowly upward win
 To one who grasps the whole :

In his wide brain the feeling deep
 That struggled on the many's tongue
 Swells to a tide of thought, whose surges
 leap
 O'er the weak thrones of wrong.

All thought begins in feeling, — wide
 In the great mass its base is hid,
 And, narrowing up to thought, stands
 glorified,
 A moveless pyramid.

Nor is he far astray who deems
 That every hope, which rises and
 grows broad
 In the world's heart, by ordered im-
 pulse streams
 From the great heart of God.

God wills, man hopes : in common souls
 Hope is but vague and undefined,

Till from the poet's tongue the message
rolls
A blessing to his kind.

Never did Poesy appear
So full of heaven to me, as when
I saw how it would pierce through pride
and fear
To the lives of coarsest men.

It may be glorious to write
Thoughts that shall glad the two or three
High souls, like those far stars that
come in sight
Once in a century ; —

But better far it is to speak
One simple word, which now and then
Shall waken their free nature in the weak
And friendless sons of men ;

To write some earnest verse or line,
Which, seeking not the praise of art,
Shall make a clearer faith and manhood
shine
In the untutored heart.

He who doth this, in verse or prose,
May be forgotten in his day,
But surely shall be crowned at last with
those
Who live and speak for aye.
1842.

RHÆCUS.

God sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm
of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race :
Therefore each form of worship that
hath swayed
The life of man, and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, rever-
ence,
Infolds some germs of goodness and
of right ;
Else never had the eager soul, which
loathes

The slothful down of pampered igno-
rance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human
heart
Which makes that all the fables it hath
coined,
To justify the reign of its belief
And strengthen it by beauty's right
divine,
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,
Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful
hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of
truth.
For, as in nature naught is made in
vain,
But all things have within their hull of
use
A wisdom and a meaning which may
speak
Of spiritual secrets to the ear
Of spirit ; so, in whatsoe'er the heart
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,
To make its inspirations suit its creed,
And from the niggard hands of false-
hood wring
Its needful food of truth, there ever is
A sympathy with Nature, which re-
veals,
Not less than her own works, pure
gleams of light
And earnest parables of inward lore.
Hear now this fairy legend of old
Greece,
As full of freedom, youth, and beauty
still
As the immortal freshness of that grace
Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze.

A youth named Rhæcus, wandering
in the wood,
Saw an old oak just trembling to its
fall,
And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,
He propped its gray trunk with admir-
ing care,
And with a thoughtless footstep loitered
on.
But, as he turned, he heard a voice be-
hind
That murmured " Rhæcus ! " 'T was
as if the leaves,

Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured it,
 And, while he paused bewildered, yet again
 It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a breeze.
 He started and beheld with dizzy eyes
 What seemed the substance of a happy dream
 Stand there before him, spreading a warm glow
 Within the green glooms of the shadowy oak.
 It seemed a woman's shape, yet all too fair
 To be a woman, and with eyes too meek
 For any that were wont to mate with gods.
 All naked like a goddess stood she there,
 And like a goddess all too beautiful
 To feel the guilt-born earthliness of shame.
 "Rhœcus, I am the Dryad of this tree,"
 Thus she began, dropping her low-toned words
 Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of dew,
 "And with it I am doomed to live and die;
 The rain and sunshine are my caterers,
 Nor have I other bliss than simple life;
 Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can give,
 And with a thankful joy it shall be thine."

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the heart,
 Yet, by the prompting of such beauty, bold,
 Answered: "What is there that can satisfy
 The endless craving of the soul but love?
 Give me thy love, or but the hope of that
 Which must be evermore my spirit's goal."
 After a little pause she said again,
 But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,
 "I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;

An hour before the sunset meet me here."
 And straightway there was nothing he could see
 But the green glooms beneath the shadowy oak,
 And not a sound came to his straining ears
 But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,
 And far away upon an emerald slope
 The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe.

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,
 Men did not think that happy things were dreams
 Because they overstepped the narrow bourne
 Of likelihood, but reverently deemed
 Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful
 To be the guerdon of a daring heart.
 So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,
 And all along unto the city's gate
 Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,
 The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,
 And he could scarce believe he had not wings,
 Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins
 Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,
 But one that in the present dwelt too much,
 And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoever
 Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,
 Like the contented peasant of a vale,
 Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.
 So, haply meeting in the afternoon
 Some comrades who were playing at the dice,
 He joined them, and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,
 And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,
 Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,
 When through the room there hummed a yellow bee
 That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs
 As if to light. And Rhœcus laughed and said,
 Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,
 "By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"
 And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
 But still the bee came back, and thrice again
 Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.
 Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
 And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,
 Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
 Against the red disk of the setting sun, —
 And instantly the blood sank from his heart,
 As if its very walls had caved away.
 Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,
 Ran madly through the city and the gate,
 And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade,
 By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,
 Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,
 And, listening fearfully, he heard once more
 The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand:
 Whereat he looked around him, but could see
 Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.
 Then sighed the voice, "O Rhœcus! nevermore

Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,
 Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love
 More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
 Filled up with nectar any mortal heart:
 But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
 And sent'st him back to me with bruised wings.
 We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
 We ever ask an undivided love,
 And he who scorns the least of Nature's works
 Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
 Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."

Then Rhœcus beat his breast, and groaned aloud,
 And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet
 This once, and I shall never need it more!"
 "Alas!" the voice returned, "'t is thou art blind,
 Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,
 But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes;
 Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
 With that again there murmured "Nevermore!"
 And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
 Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
 Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
 Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.
 The night had gathered round him:
 o'er the plain
 The city sparkled with its thousand lights,
 And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
 Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,
 With all its bright sublimity of stars,
 Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze:
 Beauty was all around him and delight,
 But from that eve he was alone on earth.

THE FALCON.

I KNOW a falcon swift and peerless
 As e'er was cradled in the pine:

No bird had ever eye so fearless,
Or wing so strong as this of mine.

The winds not better love to pilot
A cloud with molten gold o'errun,
Than him, a little burning islet,
A star above the coming sun.

For with a lark's heart he doth tower,
By a glorious upward instinct drawn ;
No bee nestles deeper in the flower
Than he in the bursting rose of dawn.

No harmless dove, no bird that singeth,
Shudders to see him overhead ;
The rush of his fierce swooping bringeth
To innocent hearts no thrill of dread.

Let fraud and wrong and baseness shiver,
For still between them and the sky
The falcon Truth hangs poised forever
And marks them with his vengeful eye.

TRIAL.

I.

WHETHER the idle prisoner through his
grate
Watches the waving of the grass-tuft
small,
Which, having colonized its rift i' the
wall,
Takes its free risk of good or evil fate,
And, from the sky's just helmet draws
its lot
Daily of shower or sunshine, cold or
hot ; —
Whether the closer captive of a creed,
Cooped up from birth to grind out end-
less chaff,
Sees through his treadmill-bars the
noonday laugh,
And feels in vain his crumpled pinions
breed ; —
Whether the Georgian slave look up
and mark,
With bellying sails puffed full, the tall
cloud-bark
Sink northward slowly, — thou alone
seem'st good,
Fair only thou, O Freedom, whose desire

Can light in muddiest souls quick seeds
of fire,
And strain life's chords to the old
heroic mood.

II.

Yet are there other gifts more fair than
thine,
Nor can I count him happiest who has
never
Been forced with his own hand his
chains to sever,
And for himself find out the way divine ;
He never knew the aspirer's glorious
pains,
He never earned the struggle's priceless
gains.
O, block by block, with sore and sharp
endeavor,
Lifelong we build these human natures
up
Into a temple fit for freedom's shrine,
And Trial ever consecrates the cup
Wherefrom we pour her sacrificial wine.

A REQUIEM.

AY, pale and silent maiden,
Cold as thou liest there,
Thine was the sunniest nature
That ever drew the air,
The wildest and most wayward,
And yet so gently kind,
Thou seemedst but to body
A breath of summer wind.

Into the eternal shadow
That girds our life around,
Into the infinite silence
Wherewith Death's shore is bound,
Thou hast gone forth, beloved !
And I were mean to weep,
That thou has left Life's shallows,
And dost possess the Deep.

Thou liest low and silent,
Thy heart is cold and still,
Thine eyes are shut forever,
And Death hath had his will ;
He loved and would have taken,
I loved and would have kept,

We strove, — and he was stronger,
And I have never wept.

Let him possess thy body,
Thy soul is still with me,
More sunny and more gladsome
Than it was wont to be :
Thy body was a fetter
That bound me to the flesh,
Thank God that it is broken,
And now I live afresh !

Now I can see thee clearly ;
The dusky cloud of clay,
That hid thy starry spirit,
Is rent and blown away :
To earth I give thy body,
Thy spirit to the sky,
I saw its bright wings growing,
And knew that thou must fly.

Now I can love thee truly,
For nothing comes between
The senses and the spirit,
The seen and the unseen ;
Lifts the eternal shadow,
The silence bursts apart,
And the soul's boundless future
Is present in my heart.

A PARABLE.

WORN and footsore was the Prophet,
When he gained the holy hill ;
" God has left the earth," he murmured,
" Here his presence lingers still.

" God of all the olden prophets,
Wilt thou speak with men no more ?
Have I not as truly served thee
As thy chosen ones of yore ?

" Hear me, guider of my fathers,
Lo ! a humble heart is mine ;
By thy mercy I beseech thee
Grant thy servant but a sign !"

Bowing then his head, he listened
For an answer to his prayer ;
No loud burst of thunder followed,
Not a murmur stirred the air : —

But the tuft of moss before him
Opened while he waited yet,
And, from out the rock's hard bosom,
Sprang a tender violet.

" God ! I thank thee," said the
Prophet ;

" Hard of heart and blind was I,
Looking to the holy mountain
For the gift of prophecy.

" Still thou speakest with thy children
Freely as in old sublime ;
Humbleness, and love, and patience,
Still give empire over time.

" Had I trusted in my nature,
And had faith in lowly things,
Thou thyself wouldst then have sought
me,
And set free my spirit's wings.

" But I looked for signs and wonders,
That o'er men should give me sway ;
Thirsting to be more than mortal,
I was even less than clay.

" Ere I entered on my journey,
As I girt my loins to start,
Ran to me my little daughter,
' The beloved of my heart ; —

" In her hand she held a flower,
Like to this as like may be,
Which, beside my very threshold,
She had plucked and brought to me."

1842.

A GLANCE BEHIND THE CUR- TAIN.

WE see but half the causes of our deeds,
Seeking them wholly in the outer life,
And heedless of the encircling spirit-
world,

Which, though unseen, is felt, and
sows in us

All germs of pure and world-wide pur-
poses.

From one stage of our being to the next
We pass unconscious o'er a slender
bridge,

The momentary work of unseen hands,
 Which crumbles down behind us;
 looking back,
 We see the other shore, the gulf be-
 tween,
 And, marvelling how we won to where
 we stand,
 Content ourselves to call the builder
 Chance,
 We trace the wisdom to the apple's fall,
 Not to the birth-throes of a mighty
 Truth
 Which, for long ages in blank Chaos
 dumb,
 Yet yearned to be incarnate, and had
 found
 At last a spirit meet to be the womb
 From which it might be born to bless
 mankind, —
 Not to the soul of Newton, ripe with all
 The hoarded thoughtfulness of earnest
 years,
 And waiting but one ray of sunlight
 more
 To blossom fully.

But whence came that ray ?

We call our sorrows Destiny, but ought
 Rather to name our high successes so.
 Only the instincts of great souls are Fate,
 And have predestined sway : all other
 things,
 Except by leave of us, could never be.
 For Destiny is but the breath of God
 Still moving in us, the last fragment left
 Of our unfallen nature, waking oft
 Within our thought, to beckon us be-
 yond
 The narrow circle of the seen and
 known,
 And always tending to a noble end,
 As all things must that overrule the
 soul,
 And for a space unseat the helmsman,
 Will.
 The fate of England and of freedom
 once
 Seemed wavering in the heart of one
 plain man :
 One step of his, and the great dial-
 hand,
 That marks the destined progress of
 the world
 In the eternal round from wisdom on

To higher wisdom, had been made to
 pause
 A hundred years. That step he did
 not take, —
 He knew not why, nor we, but only
 God, —
 And lived to make his simple oaken
 chair
 More terrible and grandly beautiful,
 More full of majesty than any throne,
 Before or after, of a British king.

Upon the pier stood two stern-vis-
 aged men,
 Looking to where a little craft lay
 moored,
 Swayed by the lazy current of the
 Thames,
 Which weltered by in muddy listless-
 ness.
 Grave men they were, and battlings of
 fierce thought
 Had trampled out all softness from
 their brows,
 And ploughed rough furrows there be-
 fore their time,
 For other crop than such as homebred
 Peace
 Sows broadcast in the willing soil of
 Youth.
 Care, not of self, but of the common-
 weal,
 Had robbed their eyes of youth, and
 left instead
 A look of patient power and iron will,
 And something fiercer, too, that gave
 broad hint
 Of the plain weapons girded at their
 sides.
 The younger had an aspect of com-
 mand, —
 Not such as trickles down, a slender
 stream,
 In the shrunk channel of a great descent.
 But such as lies entowered in heart and
 head,
 And an arm prompt to do the 'hests of
 both.
 His was a brow where gold were out
 of place,
 And yet it seemed right worthy of a
 crown
 (Though he despised such), were it
 only made

Of iron, or some serviceable stuff
 That would have matched his sinewy
 brown face.
 The elder, although such he hardly
 seemed
 (Care makes so little of some five short
 years),
 Had a clear, honest face, whose rough-
 hewn strength
 Was mildened by the scholar's wiser
 heart
 To sober courage, such as best befits
 The unsullied temper of a well-taught
 mind,
 Yet so remained that one could plainly
 guess
 The hushed volcano smouldering un-
 derneath.
 He spoke : the other, hearing, kept his
 gaze
 Still fixed, as on some problem in the
 sky.

“O CROMWELL, we are fallen on
 evil times !
 There was a day when England had
 wide room
 For honest men as well as foolish kings ;
 But now the uneasy stomach of the
 time
 Turns squeamish at them both. There-
 fore let us
 Seek out that savage clime, where men
 as yet
 Are free : there sleeps the vessel on
 the tide,
 Her languid canvas drooping for the
 wind ;
 Give us but that, and what need we to
 fear
 This Order of the Council? The free
 waves
 Will not say, No, to please a wayward
 king,
 Nor will the winds turn traitors at his
 beck :
 All things are fitly cared for, and the
 Lord
 Will watch as kindly o'er the exodus
 Of us his servants now, as in old time.
 We have no cloud or fire, and haply
 we
 May not pass dry-shod through the
 ocean-stream ;

But, saved or lost, all things are in His
 hand.”
 So spake he, and meantime the other
 stood
 With wide gray eyes still reading the
 blank air.
 As if upon the sky's blue wall he saw
 Some mystic sentence, written by a
 hand,
 Such as of old made pale the Assyrian
 king,
 Girt with his satraps in the blazing
 feast.

“HAMPDEN! a moment since, my
 purpose was
 To fly with thee, — for I will call it
 flight,
 Nor flatter it with any smother
 name, —
 But something in me bids me not to
 go ;
 And I am one, thou knowest, who, un-
 moved
 By what the weak deem omens, yet
 give heed
 And reverence due to whatsoever my
 soul
 Whispers of warning to the inner ear.
 Moreover, as I know that God brings
 round
 His purposes in ways undreamed by
 us,
 And makes the wicked but his instru-
 ments
 To hasten on their swift and sudden
 fall,
 I see the beauty of his providence
 In the King's order : blind, he will not
 let
 His doom part from him, but must bid
 it stay
 As 't were a cricket, whose enlivening
 chirp
 He loved to hear beneath his very
 hearth.
 Why should we fly? Nay, why not
 rather stay
 And rear again our Zion's crumbled
 walls,
 Not, as of old the walls of Thebes were
 built,
 By minstrel twanging, but, if need
 should be,

With the more potent music of our
 swords?
 Think'st thou that score of men beyond
 the sea
 Claim more God's care than all of
 England here?
 No: when he moves His arm, it is to
 aid
 Whole peoples, heedless if a few be
 crushed,
 As some are ever, when the destiny
 Of man takes one stride onward nearer
 home.
 Believe it, 't is the mass of men He
 loves;
 And, where there is most sorrow and
 most want,
 Where the high heart of man is trodden
 down
 The most, 't is not because He hides
 his face
 From them in wrath, as purblind teach-
 ers prate:
 Not so: there most is He, for there is
 He
 Most needed. Men who seek for Fate
 abroad
 Are not so near His heart as they who
 dare
 Frankly to face her where she faces
 them,
 On their own threshold, where their
 souls are strong
 To grapple with and throw her; as I
 once,
 Being yet a boy, did cast this puny
 king,
 Who now has grown so dotard as to
 deem
 That he can wrestle with an angry
 realm,
 And throw the browed Antæus of
 men's rights.
 No, Hampden! they have half-way
 conquered Fate
 Who go half-way to meet her, — as
 will I.
 Freedom hath yet a work for me to do;
 So speaks that inward voice which
 never yet
 Spake falsely, when it urged the spirit
 on
 To noble deeds for country and man-
 kind.

And, for success, I ask no more than
 this, —
 To bear unflinching witness to the
 truth.
 All true whole men succeed; for what
 is worth
 Success's name, unless it be the
 thought,
 The inward surety, to have carried out
 A noble purpose to a noble end,
 Although it be the gallows or the block?
 'T is only falsehood that doth ever
 need
 These outward shows of gain to bolster
 her.
 Be it we prove the weaker with our
 swords;
 Truth only needs to be for once spoke
 out,
 And there 's such music in her, such
 strange rhythm,
 As makes men's memories her joyous
 slaves,
 And clings around the soul, as the sky
 clings
 Round the mute earth, forever beauti-
 ful,
 And, if o'erclouded, only to burst forth
 More all-embracingly divine and clear:
 Get but the truth once uttered, and 't is
 like
 A star new-born, that drops into its place,
 And which, once circling in its placid
 round,
 Not all the tumult of the earth can shake.

 "What should we do in that small
 colony
 Of pinched fanatics, who would rather
 choose
 Freedom to clip an inch more from
 their hair,
 Than the great chance of setting Eng-
 land free?
 Not there, amid the stormy wilderness,
 Should we learn wisdom; or if learned,
 what room
 To put it into act, — else worse than
 naught?
 We learn our souls more, tossing for an
 hour
 Upon this huge and ever-vexed sea
 Of human thought, where kingdoms go
 to wreck

Like fragile bubbles yonder in the
 stream,
 Than in a cycle of New England sloth,
 Broke only by some petty Indian war,
 Or quarrel for a letter more or less
 In some hard word, which, spelt in
 either way,
 Not their most learn'd clerks can un-
 derstand.
 New times demand new measures and
 new men ;
 The world advances, and in time out-
 grows
 The laws that in our fathers' day were
 best ;
 And, doubtless, after us, some purer
 scheme
 Will be shaped out by wiser men than
 we,
 Made wiser by the steady growth of
 truth.
 We cannot bring Utopia by force ;
 But better, almost, be at work in sin,
 Than in a brute inaction browse and
 sleep.
 No man is born into the world, whose
 work
 Is not born with him ; there is always
 work,
 And tools to work withal, for those who
 will ;
 And bless'd are the horny hands of toil !
 The busy world shoves angrily aside
 The man who stands with arms akimbo
 set,
 Until occasion tells him what to do ;
 And he who waits to have his task
 marked out
 Shall die and leave his errand unful-
 filled.
 Our time is one that calls for earnest
 deeds :
 Reason and Government, like two
 broad seas,
 Yearn for each other with outstretch'd
 arms
 Across this narrow isthmus of the throne,
 And roll their white surf higher every
 day.
 One age moves onward, and the next
 builds up
 Cities and gorgeous palaces, where stood
 The rude log huts of those who tamed
 the wild.

Rearing from out the forests they had
 felled
 The goodly framework of a fairer state :
 The builder's trowel and the settler's axe
 Are seldom wielded by the selfsame
 hand ;
 Ours is the harder task, yet not the less
 Shall we receive the blessing for our toil
 From the choice spirits of the aftertime.
 My soul is not a palace of the past,
 Where outworn creeds, like Rome's
 gray senate, quake,
 Hearing afar the Vandal's trumpet
 hoarse,
 That shakes old systems with a thunder-
 fit.
 The time is ripe, and rotten-ripe, for
 change ;
 Then let it come : I have no dread of
 what
 Is called for by the instinct of mankind ;
 Nor think I that God's world will fall
 apart
 Because we tear a parchment more or
 less.
 Truth is eternal, but her effluence,
 With endless change is fitted to the
 hour ;
 Her mirror is turned forward to reflect
 The promise of the future, not the past.
 He who would win the name of truly
 great
 Must understand his own age and the
 next,
 And make the present ready to fulfil
 Its prophecy, and with the future merge
 Gently and peacefully, as wave with
 wave.
 The future works out great men's des-
 tinies ;
 The present is enough for common souls,
 Who, never looking forward, are indeed
 Mere clay, wherein the footprints of
 their age
 Are petrified forever : better those
 Who lead the blind old giant by the hand
 From out the pathless desert where he
 gropes,
 And set him onward in his darksome
 way.
 I do not fear to follow out the truth,
 Albeit along the precipice's edge.
 Let us speak plain : there is more force
 in names

That most men dream of; and a lie
 may keep
 Its throne a whole age longer, if it skulk
 Behind the shield of some fair-seeming
 name.
 Let us call tyrants, *tyrants*, and main-
 tain,
 That only freedom comes by grace of
 God,
 And all that comes not by his grace
 must fall;
 For men in earnest have no time to waste
 In patching fig-leaves for the naked
 truth.

“I will have one more grapple with
 the man
 Charles Stuart: whom the boy o'er-
 came,
 The man stands not in awe of. I, per-
 chance,
 Am one raised up by the Almighty arm
 To witness some great truth to all the
 world.
 Souls destined to o'erleap the vulgar lot,
 And mould the world unto the scheme
 of God,
 Have a fore-consciousness of their high
 doom,
 As men are known to shiver at the heart
 When the cold shadow of some coming
 ill
 Creeps slowly o'er their spirits un-
 awares.
 Hath God less power of prophecy than
 I?
 How else could men whom God hath
 called to sway
 Earth's rudder, and to steer the bark of
 Truth,
 Beating against the tempest tow'rd her
 port,
 Bear all the mean and buzzing griev-
 ances,
 The petty martyrdoms, wherewith Sin
 strives
 To weary out the tethered hope of Faith,
 The sneers, the unrecognizing look of
 friends,
 Who worship the dead corpse of old
 king Custom,
 Where it doth lie in state within the
 Church,
 Striving to cover up the mighty ocean

With a man's palm, and making even
 the truth
 Lie for them, holding up the glass re-
 versed,
 To make the hope of man seem further
 off?
 'My God! when I read o'er the bitter
 lives
 Of men whose eager hearts were quite
 too great
 To beat beneath the cramped mode of
 the day,
 And see them mocked at by the world
 they love,
 Haggling with prejudice for penny-
 worths
 Of that reform which their hard toil
 will make
 The common birthright of the age to
 come, —
 When I see this, spite of my faith in
 God,
 I marvel how their hearts bear up so
 long;
 Nor could they but for this same
 prophecy,
 This inward feeling of the glorious end.

“Deem me not fond; but in my
 warmer youth,
 Ere my heart's bloom was soiled and
 brushed away,
 I had great dreams of mighty things to
 come;
 Of conquest, whether by the sword or
 pen
 I knew not; but some conquest I would
 have,
 Or else swift death: now wiser grown
 in years,
 I find youth's dreams are but the flutter-
 ings
 Of those strong winds whereon the soul
 shall soar
 In aftertime to win a starry throne;
 And so I cherish them, for they were lots,
 Which I, a boy, cast in the helm of Fate.
 Now will I draw them, since a man's
 right hand,
 A right hand guided by an earnest soul,
 With a true instinct, takes the golden
 prize
 From out a thousand blanks. What
 men call luck

Is the prerogative of valiant souls,
The fealty life pays its rightful kings.
The helm is shaking now, and I will stay
To pluck my lot forth ; it were sin to
flee !”

So they two turned together ; one to
die,
Fighting for freedom on the bloody
field ;
The other, far more happy, to become
A name earth wears forever next her
heart ;
One of the few that have a right to rank
With the true Makers : for his spirit
wrought
Order from Chaos ; proved that right
divine
Dwelt only in the excellence of truth ;
And far within old Darkness' hostile
lines
Advanced and pitched the shining
tents of Light.
Nor shall the grateful Muse forget to
tell,
That — not the least among his many
claims
To deathless honor — he was MIL-
TON's friend,
A man not second among those who
lived
To show us that the poet's lyre de-
mands
An arm of tougher sinew than the
sword.

1843.

SONG.

O MOONLIGHT deep and tender,
A year and more ago,
Your mist of golden splendor
Round my betrothal shone !
O elm-leaves dark and dewy,
The very same ye seem,
The low wind trembles through ye,
Ye murmur in my dream !
O river, dim with distance,
Flow thus forever by,
A part of my existence
Within your heart doth lie !

O stars, ye saw our meeting,
Two beings and one soul,
Two hearts so madly beating
To mingle and be whole !

O happy night, deliver
Her kisses back to me,
Or keep them all, and give her
A blissful dream of me !

1842.

A CHIPPEWA LEGEND.*

ἀλγεινὰ μὲν μοι καὶ λέγειν ἔστιν τάδε
ἀλγος δὲ σιγᾶν.

Æschylus, Prom. Vincit. 197.

THE old Chief, feeling now wellnigh
his end,
Called his two eldest children to his
side,
And gave them, in few words, his part-
ing charge !
“ My son and daughter, me ye see no
more ;
The happy hunting-grounds await me,
green
With change of spring and summer
through the year :
But, for remembrance, after I am gone,
Be kind to little Sheemah for my sake :
Weakling he is and young, and knows
not yet
To set the trap, or draw the seasoned
bow ;
Therefore of both your loves he hath
more need,
And he, who needeth love, to love hath
right ;
It is not like our furs and stores of corn,
Whereto we claim sole title by our toil,
But the Great Spirit plants it in our
hearts,
And waters it, and gives it sun, to be
The common stock and heritage of all :
Therefore be kind to Sheemah, that
yourselves
May not be left deserted in your need.”

* For the leading incidents in this tale, I am indebted to the very valuable “ Algonic Researches ” of Henry R. Schoolcraft, Esq.

Alone, beside a lake, their wigwam
stood,
Far from the other dwellings of their
tribe ;

And, after many moons, the loneliness
Wearied the elder brother, and he said,
" Why should I dwell here all alone,
shut out

From the free, natural joys that fit my
age ?

Lo, I am tall and strong, well skilled
to hunt,

Patient of toil and hunger, and not yet
Have seen the danger which I dared
not look

Full in the face ; what hinders me to
be

A mighty Brave and Chief among my
kin ? "

So, taking up his arrows and his bow,
As if to hunt, he journeyed swiftly on,
Until he gained the wigwams of his
tribe,

Where, choosing out a bride, he soon
forgot,

In all the fret and bustle of new life,
The little Sheemah and his father's
charge.

Now when the sister found her
brother gone,

And that, for many days, he came not
back,

She wept for Sheemah more than for
herself ;

For Love bides longest in a woman's
heart,

And flutters many times before he flies,
And then doth perch so nearly, that a
word

May lure him back, as swift and glad
as light ;

And Duty lingers even when Love is
gone,

Oft looking out in hope of his return ;
And, after Duty hath been driven forth,
Then Selfishness creeps in the last of
all,

Warming her lean hands at the lonely
hearth,

And crouching o'er the embers, to shut
out

Whatever paltry warmth and light are
left,

With avaricious greed, from all beside.
So, for long months, the sister hunted
wide,

And cared for little Sheemah tenderly ;
But, daily more and more, the loneli-
ness

Grew wearisome, and to herself she
sighed,

" Am I not fair ? at least the glassy
pool,

That hath no cause to flatter, tells me
so ;

But, O, how flat and meaningless the
tale,

Unless it tremble on a lover's tongue !
Beauty hath no true glass, except it be
In the sweet privacy of loving eyes."

Thus deemed she idly, and forgot the
lore

Which she had learned of nature and
the woods,

That beauty's chief reward is to itself,
And that the eyes of Love reflect alone
The inward fairness, which is blurred
and lost

Unless kept clear and white by Duty's
care.

So she went forth and sought the
haunts of men,

And, being wedded, in her household
cares,

Soon, like the elder brother, quite for-
got

The little Sheemah and her father's
charge.

But Sheemah, left alone within the
lodge,

Waited and waited, with a shrinking
heart,

Thinking each rustle was his sister's
step,

Till hope grew less and less, and then
went out,

And every sound was changed from
hope to fear.

Few sounds there were : — the drop-
ping of a nut,

The squirrel's chirrup, and the jay's
harsh reman,

Autumn's sad remnants of blithe Sum-
mer's cheer,

Heard at long intervals, seemed but to
make

The dreadful void of silence silenter.
 Soon what small store his sister left was
 gone,
 And, through the Autumn, he made
 shift to live
 On roots and berries, gathered in much
 fear
 Of wolves, whose ghastly howl he
 heard oftentimes,
 Hollow and hungry, at the dead of
 night.
 But Winter came at last, and, when
 the snow,
 Thick-heaped for gleaming leagues o'er
 hill and plain,
 Spread its unbroken silence over all,
 Made bold by hunger, he was fain to
 glean
 (More sick at heart than Ruth, and all
 alone)
 After the harvest of the merciless wolf,
 Grim Boaz, who, sharp-ribbed and
 gaunt, yet feared
 A thing more wild and starving than
 himself;
 Till, by degrees, the wolf and he grew
 friends,
 And shared together all the winter
 through.

Late in the Spring, when all the ice
 was gone,
 The elder brother, fishing in the lake,
 Upon whose edge his father's wigwam
 stood,
 Heard a low moaning noise upon the
 shore:
 Half like a child it seemed, half like a
 wolf,
 And straightway there was something
 in his heart
 That said, "It is thy brother Sheemah's
 voice."
 So, paddling swiftly to the bank, he
 saw,
 Within a little thicket close at hand,
 A child that seemed fast changing to a
 wolf,
 From the neck downward, gray with
 shaggy hair,
 That still crept on and upward as he
 looked.
 The face was turned away, but well he
 knew

That it was Sheemah's, even his broth-
 er's face.
 Then with his trembling hands he hid
 his eyes,
 And bowed his head, so that he might
 not see
 The first look of his brother's eyes,
 and cried,
 "O Sheemah! O my brother, speak
 to me!
 Dost thou not know me, that I am thy
 brother?
 Come to me, little Sheemah, thou shalt
 dwell
 With me henceforth, and know no care
 or want!"
 Sheemah was silent for a space, as if
 'T were hard to summon up a human
 voice,
 And, when he spake, the sound was of
 a wolf's:
 "I know thee not, nor art thou what
 thou say'st;
 I have none other brethren than the
 wolves,
 And, till thy heart be changed from
 what it is,
 Thou art not worthy to be called their
 kin."
 Then groaned the other, with a chok-
 ing tongue,
 "Alas! my heart is changed right bit-
 terly;
 'T is shrank and parched within me
 even now!"
 And, looking upward fearfully, he saw
 Only a wolf that shrank away and ran,
 Ugly and fierce, to hide among the
 woods.

STANZAS ON FREEDOM.

MEN! whose boast it is that ye
 Come of fathers brave and free,
 If there breathe on earth a slave,
 Are ye truly free and brave?
 If ye do not feel the chain,
 When it works a brother's pain,
 Are ye not base slaves indeed,
 Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Women! who shall one day bear
 Sons to breathe New England air,

If ye near, without a blush,
Deeds to make the roused blood rush
Like red lava through your veins,
For your sisters now in chains, —
Answer ! are ye fit to be
Mothers of the brave and free ?

Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt ?
No ! true freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free !

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak :
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think ;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

COLUMBUS.

THE cordage creaks and rattles in the
wind,
With freaks of sudden hush ; the reel-
ing sea
Now thumps like solid rock beneath
the stern,
Now leaps with clumsy wrath, strikes
short, and, falling
Crumbled to whispy foam, slips rus-
tling down
The broad backs of the waves, which
jostle and crowd
To ring themselves upon that unknown
shore,
Their used familiar since the dawn of
time,
Whither this foredoomed life is guided
on
To sway on triumph's hushed, aspiring
poise
One glittering moment, then to break
fulfilled.

How lonely is the sea's perpetual swing,
The melancholy wash of endless waves,

The sigh of some grim monster undes-
cried,
Fear-painted on the canvas of the dark,
Shifting on his uneasy pillow of brine !
Yet night brings more companions than
the day
To this drear waste ; new constellations
burn,
And fairer stars, with whose calm
height my soul
Finds nearer sympathy than with my
herd
Of earthen souls, whose vision's scanty
ring
Makes me its prisoner to beat my wings
Against the cold bars of their unbelief,
Knowing in vain my own free heaven
beyond.

O God ! this world, so crammed with
eager life,
That comes and goes and wanders back
to silence
Like the idle wind, which yet man's
shaping mind
Can make his drudge to swell the long-
ing sails
Of highest endeavor, — this mad, un-
thrif world,
Which, every hour, throws life enough
away
To make her deserts kind and hospita-
ble,
Lets her great destinies be waved aside
By smooth, lip-reverent, formal infidels,
Who weigh the God they not believe
with gold,
And find no spot in Judas, save that
he,
Driving a duller bargain than he ought,
Saddled his guild with too cheap pre-
cedent.

O Faith ! if thou art strong, thine
opposite
Is mighty also, and the dull fool's sneer
Hath oftimes shot chill palsy through
the arm
Just lifted to achieve its crowning deed,
And made the firm-based heart, that
would have quailed
The rack or fagot, shudder like a leaf
Wrinkled with frost, and loose upon its
stem.

The wicked and the weak, by some dark
law,

Have a strange power to shut and rivet
down

Their own horizon round us, to unwing
Our heaven-aspiring visions, and to blur
With surly clouds the Future's gleam-
ing peaks,

Far seen across the brine of thankless
years.

If the chosen soul could never be alone
In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God,
No greatness ever had been dreamed
or done ;

Among dull hearts a prophet never
grew ;

The nurse of full-grown souls is solitude.

The old world is effete ; there man with
man

Jostles, and, in the brawl for means to
live,

Life is trod under-foot, — Life, the one
block

Of marble that's vouchsafed wherefrom
to carve

Our great thoughts, white and godlike,
to shine down

The future, Life, their redeemable block,
Which one o'er-hasty chisel-dint oft
mars,

Scanting our room to cut the features out
Of our full hope, so forcing us to crown
With a mean head the perfect limbs, or
leave

The god's face glowing o'er a satyr's
trunk,

Failure's brief epitaph.

Yes, Europe's world

Reels on to judgment ; there the com-
mon need,

Losing God's sacred use, to be a bond
'Twixt Me and Thee, sets each one
scowlingly

O'er his own selfish hoard at bay ; no
state,

Knit strongly with eternal fibres up
Of all men's separate and united weals,
Self-poised and sole as stars, yet one as
light,

Holds up a shape of large Humanity
To which by natural instinct every man
Pays loyalty exulting, by which all
Mould their own lives, and feel their
pulses filled

With the red, fiery blood of the general
life,

Making them mighty in peace, as now
in war

They are, even in the flush of victory,
weak,

Conquering that manhood which should
them subdue.

And what gift bring I to this untried
world ?

Shall the same tragedy be played anew,
And the same lurid curtain drop at last
On one dread desolation, one fierce crash
Of that recoil which on its makers God
Lets Ignorance and Sin and Hunger
make,

Early or late ? Or shall that common-
wealth

Whose potent unity and concentric force
Can draw these scattered joints and
parts of men

Into a whole ideal man once more,
Which sucks not from its limbs the life
away,

But sends its flood-tide and creates itself
Over again in every citizen,

Be there built up ? For me, I have no
choice ;

I might turn back to other destinies,
For one sincere key opes all Fortune's
doors ;

But whoso answers not God's earliest
call

Forfeits or dulls that faculty supreme
Of lying open to his genius

Which makes the wise heart certain of
its ends.

Here am I ; for what end God knows,
not I ;

Westward still points the inexorable
soul ;

Here am I, with no friend but the sad
sea,

The beating heart of this great enter-
prise,

Which, without me, would stiffen in
swift death ;

This have I mused on, since mine eye
could first

Among the stars distinguish and with
joy

Rest on that God-fed Pharos of the
north.

On some blue promontory of heaven
 lighted
 That juts far out into the upper sea ;
 To this one hope my heart hath clung
 for years,
 As would a foundling to the talisman
 Hung round his neck by hands he
 knew not whose ;
 A poor, vile thing and dross to all beside,
 Yet he therein can feel a virtue left
 By the sad pressure of a mother's hand,
 And unto him it still is tremulous
 With palpitating haste and wet with
 tears,
 The key to him of hope and human-
 ness,
 The coarse shell of life's pearl, Expect-
 ancy.
 This hope hath been to me for love and
 fame,
 Hath made me wholly lonely on the
 earth,
 Building me up as in a thick-ribbed
 tower,
 Wherewith enwalled my watching spirit
 burned,
 Conquering its little island from the
 Dark,
 Sole as a scholar's lamp, and heard
 men's steps,
 In the far hurry of the outward world,
 Pass dimly forth and back, sounds heard
 in dream
 As Ganymede by the eagle was
 snatched up
 From the gross sod to be Jove's cup-
 bearer,
 So was I lifted by my great design :
 And who hath trod Olympus, from his
 eye
 Fades not that broader outlook of the
 gods ;
 His life's low valleys overbrow earth's
 clouds,
 And that Olympian spectre of the past
 Looms towering up in sovereign mem-
 ory,
 Beckoning his soul from meaner heights
 of doom.
 Had but the shadow of the Thunder-
 er's bird,
 Flashing athwart my spirit, made of
 me
 A swift-betraying vision's Ganymede,

Yet to have greatly dreamed precludes
 low ends ;
 Great days have ever such a morning-
 red,
 On such a base great futures are built
 up,
 And aspiration, though not put in act,
 Comes back to ask its plighted troth
 again,
 Still watches round its grave the un-
 laid ghost
 Of a dead virtue, and makes other
 hopes,
 Save that implacable one, seem thin
 and bleak
 As shadows of bare trees upon the
 snow,
 Bound freezing there by the unpitying
 moon.
 While other youths perplexed their
 mandolins,
 Praying that Thetis would her fingers
 twine
 In the loose glories of the lover's hair,
 And wile another kiss to keep back
 day,
 I, stretched beneath the many-centu-
 ried shade
 Of some writhed oak, the wood's Lao-
 coön,
 Did of my hope a dryad mistress make,
 Whom I would woo to meet me privily,
 Or underneath the stars, or when the
 moon
 Flecked all the forest floor with scat-
 tered pearls.
 O days whose memory tames to fawn-
 ing down
 The surly fell of Ocean's bristled neck !
 I know not when this hope enthralled
 me first,
 But from my boyhood up I loved to
 hear
 The tall pine-forests of the Apennine
 Murmur their hoary legends of the
 sea,
 Which hearing, I in vision clear beheld
 The sudden dark of tropic night shut
 down
 O'er the huge whisper of great watery
 wastes,
 The while a pair of herons trailingy

Flapped inland, where some league-wide river hurled
 The yellow spoil of unconjectured realms
 Far through a gulf's green silence, never scarred
 By any but the North-wind's hurrying keels.
 And not the pines alone; all sights and sounds
 To my world-seeking heart paid fealty,
 And catered for it as the Cretan bees
 Brought honey to the baby Jupiter,
 Who in his soft hand crushed a violet,
 Godlike foremusing the rough thunder's gripe;
 Then did I entertain the poet's song,
 My great Idea's guest, and, passing o'er
 That iron bridge the Tuscan built to hell,
 I heard Ulysses tell of mountain-chains
 Whose adamantine links, his manacles,
 The western main shook growling, and still gnawed.
 I brooded on the wise Athenian's tale
 Of happy Atlantis, and heard Björne's keel
 Crunch the gray pebbles of the Vinland shore:
 For I believed the poets; it is they
 Who utter wisdom from the central deep,
 And, listening to the inner flow of things,
 Speak to the age out of eternity.
 Ah me! old hermits sought for solitude
 In caves and desert places of the earth,
 Where their own heart-beat was the only stir
 Of living thing that comforted the year;
 But the bald pillar-top of Simeon,
 In midnight's blankest waste, were populous,
 Matched with the isolation dear and deep
 Of him who pines among the swarm of men,
 At once a new thought's king and prisoner,

Feeling the truer life within his life,
 The fountain of his spirit's prophecy,
 Sinking away and wasting, drop by drop,
 In the ungrateful sands of sceptic ears
 He in the palace-aisles of untrud wood
 Doth walk a king; for him the pent-up cell
 Widens beyond the circles of the stars
 And all the sceptred spirits of the past
 Come thronging in to greet him as their peer;
 But in the market-place's glare and throng
 He sits apart, an exile, and his brow
 Aches with the mocking memory of its crown.
 But to the spirit select there is no choice;
 He cannot say, This will I do, or that,
 For the cheap means putting Heaven's ends in pawn,
 And bartering his bleak rocks, the freehold stern
 Of destiny's first-born, for smoother fields
 That yield no crop of self-denying will;
 A hand is stretched to him from out the dark,
 Which grasping without question, he is led
 Where there is work that he must do for God.
 The trial still is the strength's complement,
 And the uncertain, dizzy path that scales
 The sheer heights of supremest purposes
 Is steeper to the angel than the child.
 Chances have laws as fixed as planets have,
 And disappointment's dry and bitter root,
 Envy's harsh berries, and the choking pool
 Of the world's scorn, are the right mother-milk
 To the tough hearts that pioneer their kind,
 And break a pathway to those unknown realms
 That in the earth's broad shadow lie enthralled;

Endurance is the crowning quality,
 And patience all the passion of great
 hearts ;
 These are their stay, and when the
 leaden world
 Sets its hard face against their fateful
 thought,
 And brute strength, like a scornful con-
 queror,
 Clangs his huge mace down in the other
 scale,
 The inspired soul but flings his pa-
 tience in,
 And slowly that outweighs the ponder-
 ous globe, —
 One faith against a whole earth's un-
 belief,
 One soul against the flesh of all man-
 kind.

Thus ever seems it when my soul can
 hear
 The voice that errs not ; then my tri-
 umph gleams,
 O'er the blank ocean beckoning, and
 all night
 My heart flies on before me as I sail ;
 Far on I see my lifelong enterprise,
 Which rose like Ganges 'mid the freez-
 ing snows
 Of a world's sordidness, sweep broad-
 ening down,
 And, gathering to itself a thousand
 streams,
 Grow sacred ere it mingle with the sea ;
 I see the ungated wall of chaos old,
 With blocks Cyclopean hewn of solid
 night,
 Fade like a wreath of unreturning mist
 Before the irreversible feet of light ; —
 And lo, with what clear omen in the
 east
 On day's gray threshold stands the
 eager dawn,
 Like young Leander rosy from the sea
 Glowing at Hero's lattice !

One day more
 These muttering shoalbrains leave the
 helm to me :
 God, let me not in their dull ooze be
 stranded ;
 Let not this one frail bark, to hollow
 which

I have dug out the pith and sinewy
 heart
 Of my aspiring life's fair trunk, be so
 Cast up to warp and blacken in the
 sun,
 Just as the opposing wind 'gins whistle
 off
 His cheek-swollen mates, and from the
 leaning mast
 Fortune's full sail strains forward !

One poor day ! —
 Remember whose and not how short it
 is !
 It is God's day, it is Columbus's.
 A lavish day ! One day, with life and
 heart,
 Is more than time enough to find a
 world.

1844.

AN INCIDENT OF THE FIRE AT HAMBURG.

THE tower of old Saint Nicholas soared
 upward to the skies,
 Like some huge piece of Nature's
 make, the growth of centuries ;
 You could not deem its crowding spires
 a work of human art,
 They seemed to struggle lightward from
 a sturdy living heart.

Not Nature's self more freely speaks in
 crystal or in oak,
 Than, through the pious builder's hand,
 in that gray pile she spoke ;
 And as from acorn springs the oak, so,
 freely and alone,
 Sprang from his heart this hymn to
 God, sung in obedient stone.

It seemed a wondrous freak of chance,
 so perfect, yet so rough,
 A whim of Nature crystallized slowly
 in granite tough ;
 The thick spires yearned towards the
 sky in quaint harmonious lines,
 And in broad sunlight basked and slept,
 like a grove of blasted pines.

Never did rock or stream or tree lay
 claim with better right

To all the adorning sympathies of
shadow and of light ;
And, in that forest petrified, as forester
there dwells
Stout Herman, the old sacristan, sole
lord of all its bells.

Surge leaping after surge, the fire roared
onward red as blood,
Till half of Hamburg lay engulfed be-
neath the eddying flood ;
For miles away the fiery spray poured
down its deadly rain,
And back and forth the billows sucked,
and paused, and burst again.

From square to square with tiger leaps
panted the lustful fire,
The air to leeward shuddered with the
gasps of its desire ;
And church and palace, which even now
stood whelmed but to the knee,
Lift their black roofs like breakers lone
amid the whirling sea.

Up in his tower old Herman sat and
watched with quiet look ;
His soul had trusted God too long to be
at last forsook ;
He could not fear, for surely God a
pathway would unfold
Through this red sea for faithful hearts,
as once he did of old.

But scarcely can he cross himself, or on
his good saint call,
Before the sacrilegious flood o'erleaped
the churchyard wall ;
And, ere a *pater* half was said, 'mid
smoke and crackling glare,
His island tower scarce juts its head
above the wide despair.

Upon the peril's desperate peak his
heart stood up sublime ;
His first thought was for God above,
his next was for his chime ;
" Sing now and make your voices heard
in hymns of praise," cried he,
" As did the Israelites of old, safe walk-
ing through the sea !

" Through this red sea our God hath
made the pathway safe to shore ;

Our promised land stands full in sight ;
shout now as ne'er before !"
And as the tower came crushing down,
the bells, in clear accord,
Pealed forth the grand old German
hymn, — " All good souls, praise
the Lord !"

THE SOWER.

I SAW a Sower walking slow
Across the earth, from east to west ;
His hair was white as mountain snow,
His head drooped forward on his breast.

With shrivelled hands he flung his seed,
Nor ever turned to look behind ;
Of sight or sound he took no heed ;
It seemed he was both deaf and blind.

His dim face showed no soul beneath,
Yet in my heart I felt a stir,
As if I looked upon the sheath
That once had clasped Excalibur.

I heard, as still the seed he cast,
How, crooning to himself, he sung, —
" I sow again the holy Past,
The happy days when I was young.

" Then all was wheat without a tare,
Then all was righteous, fair, and true ;
And I am he whose thoughtful care
Shall plant the Old World in the New.

" The fruitful germs I scatter free,
With busy hand, while all men sleep ;
In Europe now, from sea to sea,
The nations bless me as they reap."

Then I looked back along his path,
And heard the clash of steel on steel,
Where man faced man, in deadly wrath,
While clanged the tocsin's hurrying peal.

The sky with burning towns flared red,
Nearer the noise of fighting rolled,
And brothers' blood, by brothers shed,
Crept, curdling, over pavements cold.

Then marked I how each germ of truth
Which through the dotard's fingers ran

Was mated with a dragon's tooth
Whence there sprang up an arm'd man.

I shouted, but he could not hear;
Made signs, but these he could not see;
And still, without a doubt or fear,
Broadcast he scattered anarchy.

Long to my straining ears the blast
Brought faintly back the words he
 sung:—
"I sow again the holy Past,
The happy days when I was young."

HUNGER AND COLD.

SISTERS two, all praise to you,
With your faces pinched and blue;
To the poor man you've been true
 From of old:
You can speak the keenest word,
You are sure of being heard,
From the point you're never stirred,
 Hunger and Cold!

Let sleek statesmen temporize;
Palsied are their shifts and lies
When they meet your bloodshot eyes,
 Grim and bold;
Policy you set at naught,
In their traps you'll not be caught,
You're too honest to be bought,
 Hunger and Cold!

Bolt and bar the palace door;
While the mass of men are poor,
Naked truth grows more and more
 Uncontrolled;
You had never yet, I guess,
Any praise for bashfulness,
You can visit sans court-dress,
 Hunger and Cold!

While the music fell and rose,
And the dance reeled to its close,
Where her round of costly woes
 Fashion strolled,
I beheld with shuddering fear
Wolves' eyes through the windows peer;
Little dream they you are near,
 Hunger and Cold!

When the toiler's heart you clutch,
Conscience is not valued much,
He recks not a bloody smutch
 On his gold:
Everything to you defers,
You are potent reasoners,
At your whisper Treason stirs,
 Hunger and Cold!

Rude comparisons you draw,
Words refuse to sate your maw,
Your gaunt limbs the cobweb law
 Cannot hold:
You're not clogged with foolish pride,
But can seize a right denied:
Somehow God is on your side,
 Hunger and Cold!

You respect no hoary wrong
More for having triumphed long:
Its past victims, haggard throng,
 From the mould
You unbury: swords and spears
Weaker are than poor men's tears,
Weaker than your silent years,
 Hunger and Cold!

Let them guard both hall and bower;
Through the window you will glower,
Patient till your reckoning hour
 Shall be tolled:
Cheeks are pale, but hands are red,
Guiltless blood may chance be shed,
But ye must and will be fed,
 Hunger and Cold!

God has plans man must not spoil,
Some were made to starve and toil,
Some to share the wine and oil,
 We are told:
Devil's theories are these,
Stifling hope and love and peace,
Framed your hideous lusts to please,
 Hunger and Cold!

Scatter ashes on thy head,
Tears of burning sorrow shed,
Earth! and be by Pity led
 To Love's fold;
Ere they block the very door
With lean corpses of the poor,
And will hush for naught but gore,—
 Hunger and Cold!

THE LANDLORD.

WHAT boot your houses and your lands?
In spite of close-drawn deed and
fence,

Like water, 'twixt your cheated hands,
They slip into the graveyard's sands
And mock your ownership's pretence.

How shall you speak to urge your right,
Choked with that soil for which you
lust?

The bit of clay, for whose delight
You grasp, is mortgaged, too; Death
might

Foreclose this very day in dust.

Fence as you please, this plain poor
man,

Whose only fields are in his wit,
Who shapes the world, as best he can,
According to God's higher plan,
Owns you, and fences as is fit.

Though yours the rents, his incomes
wax

By right of eminent domain;
From factory tall to woodman's axe,
All things on earth must pay their tax,
To feed his hungry heart and brain.

He takes you from your easy-chair,
And what he plans that you must do;
You sleep in down, eat dainty fare, —
He mounts his crazy garret-stair
And starves, the landlord over you.

Feeding the clods your idlesse drains,
You make more green six feet of soil;
His fruitful word, like suns and rains,
Partakes the seasons' bounteous pains,
And toils to lighten human toil.

Your lands, with force or cunning got,
Shrink to the measure of the grave;
But Death himself abridges not
The tenures of almighty thought,
The titles of the wise and brave.

 TO A PINE-TREE.

FAR up on Katahdin thou towerest,
Purple-blue with the distance and
vast;

Like a cloud o'er the lowlands thou
lowerest,
That hangs poised on a lull in the
blast,
To its fall leaning awful.

In the storm, like a prophet o'er-mad-
dened,
Thou singest and tosses thy branch-
es;

Thy heart with the terror is gladdened,
Thou forebodes the dread avalanch-
es,

When whole mountains swoop
vaward.

In the calm thou o'erstretchest the val-
leys

With thine arms, as if blessings im-
ploring,
Like an old king led forth from his
palace,
When his people to battle are pour-
ing
From the city beneath him.

To the slumberer asleep 'neath thy
glooming

Thou dost sing of wild billows in
motion,
Till he longs to be swung 'mid their
booming

In the tents of the Arabs of ocean,
Whose finned isles are their
cattle.

For the gale snatches thee for his lyre,
With mad hand crashing melody
frantic,

While he pours forth his mighty de-
sire

To leap down on the eager Atlantic,
Whose arms stretch to his play-
mate.

The wild storm makes his lair in thy
branches,

Preying thence on the continent un-
der;

Like a lion, crouched close on his
haunches,

There awaiteth his leap the fierce
thunder,
Growling low with impatience.

Spite of winter, thou keep'st thy green
glory,
Lusty father of Titans past number !
The snow-flakes alone make thee hoary,
Nestling close to thy branches in
slumber,
And thee mantling with silence.

Thou alone know'st the splendor of
winter,
'Mid thy snow-silvered, hushed pre-
cipices,
Hearing crags of green ice groan and
splinter,
And then plunge down the muffled
abysses
In the quiet of midnight.

Thou alone know'st the glory of sum-
mer,
Gazing down on thy broad seas of
forest,
In thy subjects that send a proud mur-
mur
Up to thee, to their sachem, who
towerest
From thy bleak throne to heaven.

SI DESCENDERO IN INFER-
NUM, ADES.

O, WANDERING dim on the extremest
edge
Of God's bright providence, whose
spirits sigh
Drearly in you, like the winter sedge
'That shivers o'er the dead pool stiff
and dry,
A thin, sad voice, when the bold wind
roars by
From the clear North of Duty, —
Still by cracked arch and broken shaft
I trace
That here was once a shrine and holy
place
Of the supernal Beauty, —
A child's play-altar reared of stones
and moss,
With wilted flowers for offering laid
across,
Mute recognition of the all-ruling Grace.

How far are ye from the innocent, from
those

Whose hearts are as a little lane
serene,
Smooth-heaped from wall to wall with
unbroke snows,

Or in the summer blithe with lamb-
cropped green,

Save the one track, where naught
more rude is seen

Than the plump wain at even
Bringing home four months' sunshine
bound in sheaves ! —

How far are ye from those ! yet who
believes

That ye can shut out heaven ?
Your souls partake its influence, not
in vain

Nor all unconscious, as that silent lane
Its drift of noiseless apple-blooms re-
ceives.

Looking within myself, I note how thin
A plank of station, chance, or pros-
perous fate,

Doth fence me from the clutching
waves of sin ; —

In my own heart I find the worst
man's mate,
And see not dimly the smooth-hingëd
gate

That opes to those abysses
Where ye grope darkly, — ye who never
knew

On your young hearts love's consecrat-
ing dew,

Or felt a mother's kisses,
Or home's restraining tendrils round
you curled ;

Ah, side by side with heart's-ease in
this world

The fatal nightshade grows and bitter
rue !

One band ye cannot break, — the force
that clips

And grasps your circles to the central
light ;

Yours is the prodigal comet's long el-
lipse,

Self-exiled to the farthest verge of
night ;

Yet strives with you no less that
inward might

No sin hath e'er imbruted

The god in you the creed-dimmed eye
 eludes ;
 The Law brooks not to have its solitudes
 By bigot feet polluted ;—
 Yet they who watch your God-compelled
 return
 May see your happy perihelion burn
 Where the calm sun his unfledged
 planets broods.

TO THE PAST.

WONDROUS and awful are thy silent
 halls,
 O kingdom of the past !
 There lie the bygone ages in their palls,
 Guarded by shadows vast, —
 There all is hushed and breathless,
 Save when some image of old error falls
 Earth worshipped once as deathless.

There sits drear Egypt, 'mid beleaguering
 sands,
 Half woman and half beast,
 The burnt-out torch within her mouldering
 hands
 That once lit all the East ;
 A dotard bleared and hoary,
 There Asser crouches o'er the blackened
 brands
 Of Asia's long-quenched glory.

Still as a city buried 'neath the sea
 Thy courts and temples stand ;
 Idle as forms on wind-waved tapestry
 Of saints and heroes grand,
 Thy phantasms grope and shiver,
 Or watch the loose shores crumbling
 silently
 Into Time's gnawing river.

Titanic shapes with faces blank and dun,
 Of their old godhead lorn,
 Gaze on the embers of the sunken sun,
 Which they misdeem for morn ;
 And yet the eternal sorrow
 In their unmonarched eyes says day is
 done
 Without the hope of morrow.

O realm of silence and of swart eclipse,
 The shapes that haunt thy gloom

Make signs to us and move thy withered
 lips
 Across the gulf of doom ;
 Yet all their sound and motion
 Bring no more freight to us than wraiths
 of ships
 On the mirage's ocean.

And if sometimes a moaning wandereth
 From out thy desolate halls,
 If some grim shadow of thy living death
 Across thy sunshine falls
 And scares the world to error,
 The eternal life sends forth melodious
 breath
 To chase the misty terror.

Thy mighty clamors, wars, and world-noised
 deeds
 Are silent now in dust,
 Gone like a tremble of the huddling
 reeds
 Beneath some sudden gust ;
 Thy forms and creeds have vanished,
 Tossed out to wither like unsightly
 weeds
 From the world's garden banished.

Whatever of true life there was in thee
 Leaps in our age's veins ;
 Wield still thy bent and wrinkled empery,
 And shake thine idle chains ;—
 To thee thy dross is clinging,
 For us thy martyrs die, thy prophets see,
 Thy poets still are singing.

Here, 'mid the bleak waves of our strife
 and care,
 Float the green Fortunate Isles
 Where all thy hero-spirits dwell, and
 share
 Our martyrdoms and toils ;
 The present moves attended
 With all of brave and excellent and fair
 That made the old time splendid.

TO THE FUTURE.

O LAND of Promise ! from what Pisgah's
 height
 Can I behold thy stretch of peaceful
 bowers.

Thy golden harvests flowing out of sight,
Thy nestled homes and sun-illumined
towers?

Gazing upon the sunset's high-heaped
gold,

Its crags of opal and of chrysolite,
Its deeps on deeps of glory, that un-
fold

Still brightening abysses,
And blazing precipices,

Whence but a scanty leap it seems to
heaven,

Sometimes a glimpse is given

Of thy more gorgeous realm, thy more
unstinted blisses.

O Land of Quiet! to thy shore the surf
Of the perturbed Present rolls and
sleeps;

Our storms breathe soft as June upon
thy turf

And lure out blossoms; to thy bosom
leaps,

As to a mother's, the o'erwearied heart,
Hearing far off and dim the toiling
mart,

The hurrying feet, the curses without
number,

And, circled with the glow Elysian
Of thine exulting vision,

Out of its very cares woos charms for
peace and slumber.

To thee the earth lifts up her fettered
hands

And cries for vengeance; with a pity-
ing smile

Thou blessest her, and she forgets her
bands,

And her old woe-worn face a little
while

Grows young and noble; unto thee the
Oppressor

Looks, and is dumb with awe;

The eternal law,

Which makes the crime its own blind-
fold redresser,

Shadows his heart with perilous fore-
boding,

And he can see the grim-eyed
Doom

From out the trembling gloom

Its silent-footed steeds towards his pal-
ace goading.

What promises hast thou for Poets'
eyes,

Aweary of the turmoil and the wrong!
To all their hopes what overjoyed re-
plies!

What undreamed ecstasies for bliss-
ful song!

Thy happy plains no war-trump's brawl-
ing clangor

Disturbs, and fools the poor to hate
the poor;

The humble glares not on the high with
anger;

Love leaves no grudge at less, no
greed for more;

In vain strives Self the godlike sense to
smother;

From the soul's deeps

It throbs and leaps;

The noble 'neath foul rags beholds his
long-lost brother.

To thee the Martyr looketh, and his
fires

Unlock their fangs and leave his spirit
free;

To thee the Poet 'mid his toil aspires,
And grief and hunger climb about his
knee,

Welcome as children; thou upholdest
The lone Inventor by his demon
haunted;

The Prophet cries to thee when hearts
are coldest,

And gazing o'er the midnight's
bleak abyss,

Sees the drowsed soul awaken at
thy kiss,

And stretch its happy arms and leap up
disenchanted.

Thou bringest vengeance, but so lov-
ing-kindly

The guilty thinks it pity; taught by
thee,

Fierce tyrants drop the scourges where-
with blindly

Their own souls they were scarring;
conquerors see

With horror in their hands the accursed
spear

That tore the meek One's side on
Calvarv,

And from their trophies shrink with
ghastly fear ;
Thou, too, art the Forgiver,
The beauty of man's soul to man re-
vealing ;
The arrows from thy quiver
Pierce Error's guilty heart, but only
pierce for healing.

O, whither, whither, glory-winged
dreams,

From out Life's sweat and turmoil
would ye bear me ?
Shut, gates of Fancy, on your golden
gleams, —

This agony of hopeless contrast spare
me !
Fade, cheating glow, and leave me to
my night !

He is a coward, who would borrow
A charm against the present sorrow
From the vague Future's promise of
delight :

As life's alarums nearer roll,
The ancestral buckler calls,
Self-clanging from the walls
In the high temple of the soul ;
Where are most sorrows, there the po-
et's sphere is,
To feed the soul with patience,
To heal its desolations
With words of unshorn truth, with love
that never wearies.

HEBE.

I SAW the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending ;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bend-
ing.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on, by sweet degrees
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim
Fates ;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me ;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates
On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood ; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp ; —
The beaker fell ; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up ;
What boots it patch the goblet's splin-
ters ?

Can Summer fill the icy cup,
Whose treacherous crystal is but Win-
ter's ?

O spendthrift, haste ! await the Gods ;
Their nectar crowns the lips of Pa-
tience ;

Haste scatters on unthankful sods
The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon
her ;

Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.

THE SEARCH.

I WENT to seek for Christ,
And Nature seemed so fair
That first the woods and fields my youth
enticed,

And I was sure to find him there :
The temple I forsook,
And to the solitude
Allegiance paid ; but Winter came and
shook

The crown and purple from my
wood ;
His snows, like desert sands, with
scornful drift,

Besieged the columned aisle and pal-
ace-gate ;
My Thebes, cut deep with many a sol-
emn rift,

But epitaphed her own sepulchred
state :
Then I remembered whom I went to
seek,

And blessed blunt Winter for his coun-
sel bleak.

Back to the world I turned,
For Christ, I said, is King ;

So the cramped alley and the hut I
 spurned,
 As far beneath his sojourning :
 'Mid power and wealth I sought,
 But found no trace of him,
 And all the costly offerings I had
 brought
 With sudden rust and mould grew
 dim :
 I found his tomb, indeed, where, by
 their laws,
 All must on stated days themselves
 imprison,
 Mocking with bread a dead creed's
 grinning jaws,
 Witless how long the life had thence
 arisen ;
 Due sacrifice to this they set apart,
 Prizing it more than Christ's own living
 heart.

So from my feet the dust
 Of the proud World I shook ;
 Then came dear Love and shared with
 me his crust,
 And half my sorrow's burden took.
 After the World's soft bed,
 Its rich and dainty fare,
 Like down seemed Love's coarse pil-
 low to my head,
 His cheap food seemed as manna
 rare ;
 Fresh-trodden prints of bare and bleed-
 ing feet,
 Turned to the heedless city whence I
 came,
 Hard by I saw, and springs of worship
 sweet
 Gushed from my cleft heart smitten
 by the same ;
 Love looked me in the face and spake
 no words,
 But straight I knew those footprints
 were the Lord's.

I followed where they led
 And in a hovel rude,
 With naught to fence the weather from
 his head,
 The King I sought for meekly stood ;
 A naked, hungry child
 Clung round his gracious knee,
 And a poor hunted slave looked up and
 smiled

To bless the smile that set him free :
 New miracles I saw his presence do, —
 No more I knew the hovel bare and
 poor,
 The gathered chips into a woodpile
 grew,
 The broken morsel swelled to goodly
 store ;
 I knelt and wept : my Christ no more
 I seek,
 His throne is with the outcast and the
 weak.

 THE PRESENT CRISIS.

WHEN a deed is done for Freedom,
 through the broad earth's aching
 breast
 Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling
 on from east to west,
 And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels
 the soul within him climb
 To the awful verge of manhood, as the
 energy sublime
 Of a century bursts full-blossomed on
 the thorny stem of Time.

Through the walls of hut and palace
 shoots the instantaneous throe,
 When the travail of the Ages wrings
 earth's systems to and fro ;
 At the birth of each new Era, with a
 recognizing start,
 Nation wildly looks at nation, standing
 with mute lips apart,
 And glad Truth's yet mightier man-
 child leaps beneath the Future's
 heart.

So the Evil's triumph sendeth, with a
 terror and a chill,
 Under continent to continent, the sense
 of coming ill,
 And the slave, where'er he cowers, feels
 his sympathies with God
 In hot tear-drops ebbing earthward, to
 be drunk up by the sod,
 Till a corpse crawls round unburied,
 delving in the nobler clod.

For mankind are one in spirit, and an
 instinct bears along,
 Round the earth's electric circle, the
 swift flash of right or wrong :

Whether conscious or unconscious, yet
 Humanity's vast frame
 Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels
 the gush of joy or shame ; —
 In the gain or loss of one race all the
 rest have equal claim.

Once to every man and nation comes
 the moment to decide,
 In the strife of Truth with Falsehood,
 for the good or evil side ;
 Some great cause, God's new Messiah,
 offering each the bloom or blight,
 Parts the goats upon the left hand, and
 the sheep upon the right,
 And the choice goes by forever 'twixt
 that darkness and that light.

Hast thou chosen, O my people, on
 whose party thou shalt stand,
 Ere the Doom from its worn sandals
 shakes the dust against our land ?
 Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet
 't is Truth alone is strong,
 And, albeit she wander outcast now, I
 see around her throng
 Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to en-
 shield her from all wrong.

Backward look across the ages and the
 beacon-moments see,
 That, like peaks of some sunk conti-
 nent, jut through Oblivion's sea ;
 Not an ear in court or market for the
 low foreboding cry
 Of those Crises, God's stern winnowers,
 from whose feet earth's chaff must
 fly ;
 Never shows the choice momentous till
 the judgment hath passed by.

Careless seems the great Avenger ; his
 tory's pages but record
 One death-grapple in the darkness
 'twixt old systems and the Word ;
 Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong
 forever on the throne, —
 Yet that scaffold sways the future, and,
 behind the dim unknown,
 Standeth God within the shadow, keep-
 ing watch above his own.

We see dimly in the Present what is
 small and what is great,
 Slow of faith, how weak an arm may
 turn the iron helm of fate,

But the soul is still oracular ; amid the
 market's din,
 List the ominous stern whisper from
 the Delphic cave within, —
 "They enslave their children's chil-
 dren who make compromise with
 sin."

Slavery, the earth-born Cyclops, fellest
 of the giant brood,
 Sons of brutish Force and Darkness,
 who have drenched the earth with
 blood,
 Famished in his self-made desert, blind-
 ed by our purer day,
 Gropes in yet unblasted regions for his
 miserable prey ; —
 Shall we guide his gory fingers where
 our helpless children play ?

Then to side with Truth is noble when
 we share her wretched crust,
 Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
 and 't is prosperous to be just ;
 Then it is the brave man chooses, while
 the coward stands aside,
 Doubting in his abject spirit, till his
 Lord is crucified,
 And the multitude make virtue of the
 faith they had denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes, —
 they were souls that stood alone,
 While the men they agonized for hurled
 the contumelious stone,
 Stood serene, and down the future saw
 the golden beam incline
 To the side of perfect justice, mastered
 by their faith divine,
 By one man's plain truth to manhood
 and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's
 bleeding feet I track,
 Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the
 cross that turns not back,
 And these mounts of anguish number
 how each generation learned
 One new word of that grand *Creds*
 which in prophet-hearts hath
 burned
 Since the first man stood God-con-
 quered with his face to heaven up-
 turned.

For Humanity sweeps onward : where
to-day the martyr stands,
On the morrow crouches Judas with the
silver in his hands ;
Far in front the cross stands ready and
the crackling fagots burn,
While the hooting mob of yesterday in
silent awe return
To glean up the scattered ashes into
History's golden urn.

'T is as easy to be heroes as to sit the
idle slaves
Of a legendary virtue carved upon our
fathers' graves,
Worshippers of light ancestral make
the present light a crime ; —
Was the Mayflower launched by cow-
ards, steered by men behind their
time ?
Turn those tracks toward Past or
Future, that make Plymouth rock
sublime ?

They were men of present valor, stal-
wart old iconoclasts,
Unconvinced by axe or gibbet that all
virtue was the Past's ;
But we make their truth our falsehood,
thinking that hath made us free,
Hoarding it in mouldy parchments,
while our tender spirits flee
The rude grasp of that great Impulse
which drove them across the sea.

They have rights who dare maintain
them ; we are traitor. to our sires,
Smothering in their holy ashes Free-
dom's new-lit altar fires ;
Shall we make their creed our jailer ?
Shall we, in our haste to slay,
From the tombs of the old prophets
steal the funeral lamps away
To light up the martyr-fagots round
the prophets of to-day ?

New occasions teach new duties : Time
makes ancient good uncouth ;
They must upward still, and onward,
who would keep abreast of Truth ;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires ! we
ourselves must Pilgrims be,

Launch our Mayflower, and steer bold-
ly through the desperate winter
sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with
the Past's blood-rusted key.

December, 1845.

AN INDIAN-SUMMER REV-
ERIE.

WHAT visionary tints the year puts
on,
When falling leaves falter through
motionless air
Or numbly cling and shiver to be
gone !
How shimmer the low flats and pas-
tures bare,
As with her nectar Hebe Autumn
fills
The bowl between me and those
distant hills,
And smiles and shakes abroad her
misty, tremulous hair !

No more the landscape holds its
wealth apart,
Making me poorer in my poverty,
But mingles with my senses and
my heart ;
My own projected spirit seems to me
In her own reverie the world to
steep ;
'T is she that waves to sympathetic
sleep,
Moving, as she is moved, each field
and hill and tree.

How fuse and mix, with what un-
felt degrees,
Clasped by the faint horizon's languid
arms,
Each into each, the hazy distances !
The softened season all the landscape
charms ;
Those hills, my native village that
embay,
In waves of dreamier purple roll
away,
And floating in mirage seem all the
glimmering farms.

Far distant sounds the hidden
chickadee
Close at my side ; far distant sound
the leaves ;
The fields seem fields of dream,
where Memory
Wanders like gleaning Ruth ; and as
the sheaves
Of wheat and barley wavered in
the eye
Of Boaz as the maiden's glow went
by,
So tremble and seem remote all things
the sense receives.

The cock's shrill trump that tells
of scattered corn,
Passed breezily on by all his flapping
mates,
Faint and more faint, from barn to
barn is borne,
Southward, perhaps to far Magellan's
Straits :
Dimly I catch the throb of distant
flails ;
Silently overhead the hen-hawk
sails,
With watchful, measuring eye, and for
his quarry waits.

The sobered robin, hunger-silent
now,
Seeks cedar-berries blue, his autumn
cheer ;
The squirrel, on the shingly shag-
bark's bough,
Now saws, now lists with downward
eye and ear,
Then drops his nut, and, with a
chipping bound,
Whisks to his winding fastness
underground :
The clouds like swans drift down the
streaming atmosphere.

O'er yon bare knoll the pointed
cedar shadows
Drowse on the crisp, gray moss ; the
ploughman's call
Creeps faint as smoke from black,
fresh-furrowed meadows ;
The single crow a single caw lets fall ;
And all around me every bush and
tree

Says Autumn's here, and Winter
soon will be,
Who snows his soft, white sleep and
silence over all.

The birch, most shy and ladylike
of trees,
Her poverty, as best she may, re-
trieves,
And hints at her foregone gen-
tilities
With some saved relics of her wealth
of leaves :
The swamp-oak, with his royal
purple on,
Glares red as blood across the sink-
ing sun,
As one who prouder to a falling for-
tune cleaves.

He looks a sachem, in red blanket
wrapt,
Who, 'mid some council of the sad-
garbed whites,
Erect and stern, in his own memo-
ries lapt,
With distant eye broods over other
sights,
Sees the hushed wood the city's
flare replace,
The wounded turf heal o'er the
railway's trace,
And roams the savage Past of his un-
dwindled rights.

The red-oak, softer-grained, yields
all for lost,
And, with his crumpled foliage stiff
and dry,
After the first betrayal of the frost,
Rebuffs the kiss of the relenting sky ;
The chestnuts, lavish of their long-
hid gold,
To the faint Summer, beggared
now and old,
Pour back the sunshine hoarded 'neath
her favoring eye.

The ash her purple drops forgiv-
ingly
And sadly, breaking not the general
hush ;
The maple-swamps glow like a
sunset sea,
Each leaf a ripple with its separate
flush ;

All round the wood's edge creeps
the skirting blaze
Of bushes low, as when, on cloudy
days,

Ere the rain falls, the cautious farmer
burns his brush.

O'er yon low wall, which guards
one unkempt zone,

Where vines, and weeds, and scrub-
oaks intertwine

Safe from the plough, whose rough,
discordant stone

Is massed to one soft gray by lichens
fine,

The tangled blackberry, crossed
and recrossed, weaves

A prickly network of ensanguined
leaves ;

Hard by, with coral beads, the prim
black-alders shine.

Pillaring with flame this crumbling
boundary,

Whose loose blocks topple 'neath the
ploughboy's foot,

Who, with each sense shut fast ex-
cept the eye,

Creeps close and scares the jay he
hoped to shoot,

The woodbine up the elm's straight
stem aspires,

Coiling it, harmless, with autumnal
fires ;

In the ivy's paler blaze the martyr oak
stands mute.

Be'low, the Charles — a stripe of
nether sky,

Now hid by rounded apple-trees be-
tween,

Whose gaps the misplaced sail
sweeps bellying by,

Now flickering golden through a
woodland screen,

Then spreading out, at his next
turn beyond,

A silver circle like an inland
pond —

Slips seaward silently through marshes
purple and green.

Dear marshes ! vain to him the
gift of sight

Who cannot in their various incomes
share,

From every season drawn, of shade
and light,

Who sees in them but levels brown
and bare ;

Each change of storm or sunshine
scatters free

On them its largess of variety,

For Nature with cheap means still
works her wonders rare.

In Spring they lie one broad ex-
pense of green,

O'er which the light winds run with
glimmering feet :

Here, yellower stripes track out
the creek unseen,

There, darker growths o'er hidden
ditches meet ;

And purpler stains show where the
blossoms crowd,

As if the silent shadow of a cloud
Hung there becalmed, with the next
breath to fleet.

All round, upon the river's slip-
pery edge,

Witching to deeper calm the drowsy
tide,

Whispers and leans the breeze-
entangling sedge ;

Through emerald glooms the linger-
ing waters slide,

Or, sometimes wavering, throw
back the sun,

And the stiff banks in eddies melt
and run

Of dimpling light, and with the cur-
rent seem to glide.

In Summer 't is a blithesome sight
to see,

As, step by step, with measured
swing, they pass,

The wide-ranked mowers wading
to the knee,

Their sharp scythes panting through
the thick-set grass ;

Then, stretched beneath a rick's
shade in a ring,

Their nooning take, while one be-
gins to sing

A stave that droops and dies 'neath the
close sky of brass.

Meanwhile that devil-may-care, the
bobolink,
Remembering duty, in mid-quaver
stops
Just ere he sweeps o'er rapture's
tremulous brink,
And 'twixt the winrows most de-
murely drops,
A decorous bird of business, who
provides
For his brown mate and fledglings
six besides,
And looks from right to left, a farmer
'mid his crops.

Another change subdues them in
the Fall,
But saddens not; they still show
merrier tints,
Though sober russet seems to cover
all;
When the first sunshine through their
dew-drops glints,
Look how the yellow clearness,
streamed across,
Redeems with rarer hues the sea-
son's loss,
As Dawn's feet there had touched and
left their rosy prints.

Or come when sunset gives its
freshened zest,
Lean o'er the bridge and let the
ruddy thrill,
While the shorn sun swells down
the hazy west,
Glow opposite; — the marshes drink
their fill
And swoon with purple veins, then
slowly fade
Through pink to brown, as east-
ward moves the shade,
Lengthening with stealthy creep, of Si-
mond's darkening hill.

Later, and yet ere Winter wholly
shuts,
Ere through the first dry snow the
runner grates,
And the loath cart-wheel screams
in slippery ruts,
While firmer ice the eager boy awaits,
Trying each buckle and strap be-
side the fire,

And until bedtime plays with his
desire,
Twenty times putting on and off his
new-bought skates; —

Then, every morn, the river's banks
shine bright
With smooth plate-armor, treacher-
ous and frail,
By the frost's clinking hammers
forged at night,
'Gainst which the lances of the sun
prevail,
Giving a pretty emblem of the day
When guiltier arms in light shall
melt away,
And states shall move free-limbed,
loosed from war's cramping mail.

And now those waterfalls the ebb-
ing river
Twice every day creates on either
side
Tinkle, as through their fresh-
sparred grotts they shiver
In grass-arched channels to the sun
denied;
High flaps in sparkling blue the
far-heard crow,
The silvered flats gleam frostily
below,
Suddenly drops the gull and breaks the
glassy tide.

But crowned in turn by vying sea-
sons three,
Their winter halo hath a fuller ring;
This glory seems to rest immova-
bly, —
The others were too fleet and vanish-
ing;
When the hid tide is at its highest
flow,
O'er marsh and stream one breath-
less trance of snow
With brooding fulness awes and hushes
everything.

The sunshine seems blown off by
the bleak wind,
As pale as formal candles lit by day;
Gropes to the sea the river dumb
and blind;

The brown ricks, snow-thatched by
 the storm in play,
 Show fearful breakers combing o'er
 their lee,
 White crests as of some just en-
 charmed sea,
 Checked in their maddest leap and
 hanging poised midway.

But when the eastern blow, with
 rain aslant,
 From mid-sea's prairies green and
 rolling plains
 Drives in his wallowing herds of
 billows gaunt,
 And the roused Charles remembers
 in his veins
 Old Ocean's blood and snaps his
 gyves of frost,
 That tyrannous silence on the
 shores is tost
 In dreary wreck, and crumbling deso-
 lation reigns.

Edgewise or flat, in Druid-like de-
 vice,
 With leaden pools between or gullies
 bare,
 The blocks lie strewn, a bleak
 Stonehenge of ice :
 No life, no sound, to break the grim
 despair,
 Save sullen plunge, as through the
 sedges stiff
 Down crackles riverward some
 thaw-sapped cliff,
 Or when the close-wedged fields of ice
 crunch here and there.

But let me turn from fancy-pic-
 tured scenes
 To that whose pastoral calm before
 me lies :
 Here nothing harsh or rugged in-
 tervenes ;
 The early evening with her misty
 dyes
 Smooths off the ravelled edges of
 the nigh,
 Relieves the distant with her cool-
 er sky,
 And tones the landscape down, and
 soothes the wearied eyes.

There gleams my native village,
 dear to me,
 Though higher change's waves each
 day are seen,
 Whelming fields famed in boy-
 hood's history,
 Sanding with houses the diminished
 green ;
 There, in red brick, which soften-
 ing time defies,
 Stand square and stiff the Muses'
 factories : —
 How with my life knit up is every well-
 known scene !

Flow on, dear river ! not alone you
 flow
 To outward sight, and through your
 marshes wind ;
 Fed from the mystic springs of
 long-ago,
 Your twin flows silent through my
 world of mind :
 Grow dim, dear marshes, in the
 evening's gray !
 Before my inner sight ye stretch
 away,
 And will forever, though these fleshy
 eyes grow blind.

Beyond the hillock's house-bespot-
 ted swell,
 Where Gothic chapels house the
 horse and chaise,
 Where quiet cits in Grecian tem-
 ples dwell,
 Where Coptic tombs resound with
 prayer and praise,
 Where dust and mud the equal
 year divide,
 There gentle Allston lived, and
 wrought, and died,
 Transfiguring street and shop with his
 illumined gaze.

Virgilium vidi tantum, — I have
 seen
 But as a boy, who looks alike on all,
 That misty hair, that fine Undine-
 like mien,
 Tremulous as down the feeling's
 faintest call : —
 Ah, dear old homestead ! count it
 to thy fame

That thither many times the Painter came ; —
One elm yet bears his name, a feathery tree and tall.

Swiftly the present fades in memory's glow, —
Our only sure possession is the past ;
The village blacksmith died a month ago,
And dim to me the forge's roaring blast ;
Soon fire-new mediævals we shall see
Oust the black smithy from its chestnut-tree,
And that hewn down, perhaps, the beehive green and vast.

How many times, prouder than king on throne,
Loosed from the village school-dame's A's and B's,
Panting have I the creaking bellows blown,
And watched the pent volcano's red increase,
Then paused to see the ponderous sledge, brought down
By that hard arm voluminous and brown,
From the white iron swarm its golden vanishing bees.

Dear native town ! whose choking elms each year
With eddying dust before their time turn gray,
Pining for rain, — to me thy dust is dear ;
It glorifies the eve of summer day,
And when the westering sun half sunken burns,
The mote-thick air to deepest orange turns,
The westward horseman rides through clouds of gold away,

So palpable, I've seen those unshorn few,
The six old willows at the causey's end

(Such trees Paul Potter never dreamed nor drew),
Through this dry mist their checker-
ing shadows send,
Striped, here and there, with many a long-drawn thread,
Where streamed through leafy chinks the trembling red,
Past which, in one bright trail, the hangbird's flashes blend.

Yes, dearer far thy dust than all that e'er,
Beneath the awarded crown of victory,
Gilded the blown Olympic chariot-
eer ;
Though lightly prized the ribboned parchments three,
Yet *collegisse juvat*, I am glad
That here what colleging was mine I had, —
It linked another tie, dear native town,
with thee !

Nearer art thou than simply native earth,
My dust with thine concedes a deeper tie ;
A closer claim thy soil may well put forth,
Something of kindred more than sympathy ;
For in thy bounds I reverently laid away
That blinding anguish of forsaken clay,
That title I seemed to have in earth and sea and sky,

That portion of my life more choice to me
(Though brief, yet in itself so round and whole)
Than all the imperfect residue can be ; —
The Artist saw his statue of the soul
Was perfect ; so, with one regretful stroke,
The earthen model into fragments broke,
And without her the impoverished seasons roll.

THE GROWTH OF THE
LEGEND.

A FRAGMENT.

A LEGEND that grew in the forest's hush
Slowly as tear-drops gather and gush,
When a word some poet chanced to say
Ages ago, in his careless way,
Brings our youth back to us out of its
shroud

Clearly as under yon thunder-cloud
I see that white sea-gull. It grew and
grew,

From the pine-trees gathering a sombre
hue,

Till it seems a mere murmur out of the vast

Norwegian forests of the past ;
And it grew itself like a true Northern
pine,

First a little slender line,
Like a mermaid's green eyelash, and
then anon

A stem that a tower might rest upon,
Standing spear-straight in the waist-
deep moss,

Its bony roots clutching around and
across,

As if they would tear up earth's heart
in their grasp

Ere the storm should uproot them or
make them unclasp ;

Its cloudy boughs singing, as suiteth
the pine,

To shrunk snow-bearded sea-kings old
songs of the brine,

Till they straightened and let their
staves fall to the floor,

Hearing waves moan again on the
perilous shore

Of Vinland, perhaps, while their prow
groped its way

'Twas the frothy gnashed tusks of some
ship-crunching bay.

So, pine-like, the legend grew, strong-
limbed and tall,

As the Gypsy child grows that eats
crusts in the hall ;

It sucked the whole strength of the
earth and the sky,

Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, all
brought it supply ;

'Twas a natural growth, and stood fear-
lessly there,

A true part of the landscape as sea,
land, and air ;

For it grew in good times, ere the
fashion it was

To force up these wild births of the
woods under glass,

And so, if 't is told as it should be told,
Though 't were sung under Venice's

moonlight of gold,
You would hear the old voice of its

mother, the pine,
Murmur sealike and northern through

every line,
And the verses should hang, self-sus-
tained and free,

Round the vibrating stem of the melody,
Like the lithe sun-steeped limbs of the

parent tree.

Yes, the pine is the mother of legends ;
what food

For their grim roots is left when the
thousand-year'd wood —

The dim-aisled cathedral, whose tall
arches spring

Light, sinewy, graceful, firm-set as the
wing

From Michael's white shoulder — is
hewn and defaced

By iconoclast axes in desperate waste,
And its wrecks seek the ocean it pro-
phesied long,

Cassandra-like, crooning its mystical
song ?

Then the legends go with them, — even
yet on the sea

A wild virtue is left in the touch of the
tree,

And the sailor's night-watches are
thrilled to the core

With the lineal offspring of Odin and
Thor.

Yes, wherever the pine-wood has never
let in,

Since the day of creation, the light and
the din

Of manifold life, but has safely conveyed
From the midnight primeval its armful

of shade,

And has kept the weird Past with its
sagas alive

'Mid the hum and the stir of To-day's
 busy hive,
 There the legend takes root in the age-
 gathered gloom,
 And its murmurous boughs for their
 tossing find room.

Where Aroostook, far-heard, seems to
 sob as he goes
 Groping down to the sea 'neath his
 mountainous snows ;

Where the lake's frore Sahara of never-
 tracked white,

When the crack shoots across it, com-
 plains to the night

With a long, lonely moan, that leagues
 northward is lost,

As the ice shrinks away from the tread
 of the frost ;

Where the lumberers sit by the log-fires
 which throw

Their own threatening shadows far
 round o'er the snow,

When the wolf howls aloof, and the
 wavering glare

Flashes out from the blackness the eyes
 of the bear,

When the wood's huge recesses, half-
 lighted, supply

A canvas where Fancy her mad brush
 may try,

Blotting in giant Horrors that venture
 not down

Through the right-angled streets of the
 brisk, whitewashed town,

But skulk in the depths of the measure-
 less wood

'Mid the Dark's creeping whispers that
 curdle the blood,

When the eye, glazed in dread o'er
 the shoulder, may dream,

Ere it shrinks to the camp-fire's com-
 panioning gleam,

That it saw the fierce ghost of the Red
 Man crouch back

To the shroud of the tree-trunk's in-
 vincible black ; —

There the old shapes crowd thick round
 the pine-shadowed camp,

Which shun the keen gleam of the
 scholarly lamp,

And the seed of the legend finds true
 Norland ground,

While the border-tale's told and the
 canteen flits round.

A CONTRAST.

THY love thou sentest oft to me,
 And still as oft I thrust it back ;
 Thy messengers I could not see
 In those who everything did lack, ~
 The poor, the outcast, and the black.

Pride held his hand before mine eyes,
 The world with flattery stuffed mine
 ears ;

I looked to see a monarch's guise,
 Nor dreamed thy love would knock
 for years,
 Poor, naked, fettered, full of tears.

Yet, when I sent my love to thee,
 Thou with a smile didst take it in,
 And entertain'dst it royally,
 Though grimed with earth, with
 hunger thin,
 And leprous with the taint of sin.

Now every day thy love I meet,
 As o'er the earth it wanders wide,
 With weary step and bleeding feet,
 Still knocking at the heart of pride
 And offering grace, though still denied.

EXTREME UNCTION.

Go ! leave me, Priest ; my soul would
 be

Alone with the consoler, Death ;
 Far sadder eyes than thine will see
 This crumbling clay yield up its
 breath ;

These shrivelled hands have deeper
 stains

Than holy oil can cleanse away, —
 Hands that have plucked the world's
 coarse gains

As erst they plucked the flowers of
 May.

Call, if thou canst, to those gray eyes
 Some faith from youth's traditions
 wrung ;

This fruitless husk which dustward
 dries

Has been a heart once, has been
 young ;

On this bowed head the awful Past
Once laid its consecrating hands ;
The Future in its purpose vast
Paused, waiting my supreme com-
mands.

But look ! whose shadows block the
door ?

Who are those two that stand aloof ?
See ! on my hands this freshening gore
Writes o'er again its crimson proof !
My looked-for death-bed guests are
met ; —

There my dead Youth doth wring its
hands,
And there, with eyes that goad me yet,
The ghost of my Ideal stands !

God bends from out the deep and says, —
“ I gave thee the great gift of life ;
Wast thou not called in many ways ?
Are not my earth and heaven at strife ?
I gave thee of my seed to sow,
Bringest thou me my hundred-fold ? ”
Can I look up with face aglow,
And answer, “ Father, here is gold ” ?

I have been innocent ; God knows
When first this wasted life began,
Not grape with grape more kindly
grows,
Than I with every brother-man :
Now here I gasp ; what lose my kind,
When this fast ebbing breath shall
part ?
What bands of love and service bind
This being to the world's sad heart ?

Christ still was wandering o'er the earth
Without a place to lay his head :
He found free welcome at my hearth,
He shared my cup and broke my
bread :
Now, when I hear those steps sublime,
That bring the other world to this,
My snake-turned nature, sunk in slime,
Starts sideway with defiant hiss.

Upon the hour when I was born,
God said, “ Another man shall be, ”
And the great Maker did not scorn
Out of himself to fashion me ;
He sunned me with his ripening looks,

And Heaven's rich instincts in me
grew,
As effortless as woodland nooks
Send violets up and paint them blue.

Yes, I who now, with angry tears,
Am exiled back to brutish clod,
Have borne unquenched for fourscore
years
A spark of the eternal God ;
And to what end ? How yield I back
The trust for such high uses given ?
Heaven's light hath but revealed a track
Whereby to crawl away from heaven.

Men think it is an awful sight
To see a soul just set adrift
On that drear voyage from whose night
The ominous shadows never lift ;
But 't is more awful to behold
A helpless infant newly born,
Whose little hands unconscious hold
The keys of darkness and of morn.

Mine held them once ; I flung away
Those keys that might have open set
The golden sluices of the day,
But clutch the keys of darkness yet ; —
I hear the reapers singing go
Into God's harvest ; I, that might
With them have chosen, here below
Grope shuddering at the gates of
night.

O glorious Youth, that once wast mine !
O high Ideal ! all in vain
Ye enter at this ruined shrine
Whence worship ne'er shall rise
again ;
The bat and owl inhabit here,
The snake nests in the altar-stone,
The sacred vessels moulder near,
The image of the God is gone.

THE OAK.

WHAT gnarled stretch, what depth of
shade, is his !
There needs no crown to mark the
forest's king ;
How in his leaves outshines full sum-
mer's bliss !

Sun, storm, rain, dew, to him their
tribute bring,
Which he with such benignant royalty
Accepts, as overpayeth what is lent ;
All nature seems his vassal proud to
be,
And cunning only for his ornament.

How towers he, too, amid the billowed
snows,

An unquelled exile from the sum-
mer's throne,
Whose plain, unincinctured front more
kingly shows,
Now that the obscuring courtier
leaves are flown.

His boughs make music of the winter
air,

Jewelled with sleet, like some cathed-
ral front

Where clinging snow-flakes with quaint
art repair

The dints and furrows of time's en-
vious brunt.

How doth his patient strength the rude
March wind

Persuade to seem glad breaths of
summer breeze,

And win the soil that fain would be un-
kind,

To swell his revenues with proud in-
crease !

He is the gem ; and all the landscape
wide

(So doth his grandeur isolate the
sense)

Seems but the setting, worthless all be-
side,

An empty socket, were he fallen
thence.

So, from oft converse with life's wintry
gales,

Should man learn how to clasp with
tougher roots

The inspiring earth ; — how otherwise
avails

The leaf-creating sap that sunward
shoots ?

So every year that falls with noiseless
flake

Should fill old scars up on the storm-
ward side,

And make hoar age revered for age's
sake,
Not for traditions of youth's leafy
pride.

So, from the pinched soil of a churlish
fate,

True hearts compel the sap of stur-
dier growth,

So between earth and heaven stand
simply great,

That these shall seem but their at-
tendants both ;

For nature's forces with obedient zeal
Wait on the rooted faith and oaken
will ;

As quickly the pretender's cheat they
feel,

And turn mad Pucks to flout and
mock him still.

Lord ! all thy works are lessons, — each
contains

Some emblem of man's all-contain-
ing soul ;

Shall he make fruitless all thy glorious
pains,

Delving within thy grace an eyeless
mole ?

Make me the least of thy Dodona-
grove,

Cause me some message of thy truth
to bring,

Speak but a word through me, nor let
thy love

Among my boughs disdain to perch
and sing.

AMBROSE.

NEVER, surely, was holier man
Than Ambrose, since the world began ;

With diet spare and raiment thin
He shielded himself from the father of

sin ;
With bed of iron and scourgings oft,

His heart to God's hand as wax made
soft.

Through earnest prayer and watchings
long

He sought to know 'twixt right and
wrong,

Much wrestling with the blessed Word
To make it yield the sense of the Lord,
That he might build a storm-proof
creed
To fold the flock in at their need.

At last he builded a perfect faith,
Fenced round about with *The Lord*
thus saith ;

To himself he fitted the doorway's size,
Meted the light to the need of his eyes,
And knew, by a sure and inward sign,
That the work of his fingers was divine.

Then Ambrose said, "All those shall
die
The eternal death who believe not as
I";
And some were boiled, some burned in
fire,
Some sawn in twain, that his heart's
desire,
For the good of men's souls, might be
satisfied,
By the drawing of all to the righteous
side.

One day, as Ambrose was seeking the
truth
In his lonely walk, he saw a youth
Resting himself in the shade of a tree ;
It had never been given him to see
So shining a face, and the good man
thought
'T were pity he should not believe as
he ought.

So he set himself by the young man's
side,
And the state of his soul with questions
tried ;
But the heart of the stranger was hard-
ened indeed,
Nor received the stamp of the one true
creed,
And the spirit of Ambrose waxed sore
to find
Such face the porch of so narrow a
mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire
The shape that answers his own desire,
So each," said the youth, "in the Law
shall find

The figure and features of his mind ;
And to each in his mercy hath God al-
lowed
His several pillar of fire and cloud."

The soul of Ambrose burned with zeal
And holy wrath for the young man's
weal :

"Believest thou then, most wretched
youth,"

Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth?
I fear me thy heart is too cramped with
sin

To take the Lord in his glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where
they stood

A fountain of waters sweet and good ;
The youth to the streamlet's brink drew
near

Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of
creeds, look here !"

Six vases of crystal then he took,
And set them along the edge of the
brook.

"As into these vessels the water I pour,
There shall one hold less, another more,
And the water unchanged, in every
case,

Shall put on the figure of the vase ;
O thou, who wouldst unity make
through strife,
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of
Life?

When Ambrose looked up, he stood
alone,

The youth and the stream and the vases
were gone ;

But he knew, by a sense of humbled
grace,

He had talked with an angel face to
face,

And felt his heart change inwardly,
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.

ABOVE AND BELOW.

I.

O DWELLERS in the valley-land,
Who in deep twilight grope and
cower,

Till the slow mountain's dial-hand
Shortens to noon's triumphal hour, —
While ye sit idle, do ye think
The Lord's great work sits idle too?
That light dare not o'erleap the brink
Of morn, because 't is dark with you?

Though yet your valleys skulk in night,
In God's ripe fields the day is cried,
And reapers, with their sickles bright,
Troop, singing, down the mountain-
side :

Come up, and feel what health there is
In the frank Dawn's delighted eyes,
As, bending with a pitying kiss,
The night-shed tears of Earth she
dries !

The Lord wants reapers : O, mount up,
Before night comes, and says, — "Too
late !"

Stay not for taking scrip or cup,
The Master hungers while ye wait ;
'T is from these heights alone your eyes
The advancing spears of day can see,
Which o'er the eastern hill-tops rise,
To break your long captivity.

II.

Lone watcher on the mountain-height !
It is right precious to behold
The first long surf of climbing light
Flood all the thirsty east with gold ;
But we, who in the shadow sit,
Know also when the day is nigh,
Seeing thy shining forehead lit
With his inspiring prophecy.

Thou hast thine office ; we have ours ;
God lacks not early service here,
But what are thine eleventh hours
He counts with us for morning
cheer ;

Our day, for Him, is long enough,
And when he giveth work to do,
The bruised reed is amply tough
To pierce the shield of error through.

But not the less do thou aspire
Light's earlier messages to preach ;
Keep back no syllable of fire, —
Plunge deep the rowels of thy speech.
Yet God deems not thine aeriéd sight

More worthy than our twilight
dim, —
For meek Obedience, too, is Light,
And following that is finding Him.

THE CAPTIVE.

It was past the hour of trysting,
But she lingered for him still ;
Like a child, the eager streamlet
Leaped and laughed adown the hill,
Happy to be free at twilight
From its toiling at the mill.

Then the great moon on a sudden
Ominous, and red as blood,
Startling as a new creation,
O'er the eastern hill-top stood,
Casting deep and deeper shadows
Through the mystery of the wood.

Dread closed huge and vague about
her,
And her thoughts turned fearfully
To her heart, if there some shelter
From the silence there might be,
Like bare cedars leaning inland
From the blighting of the sea.

Yet he came not, and the stillness
Dampened round her like a tomb ;
She could feel cold eyes of spirits
Looking on her through the gloom,
She could hear the groping footsteps
Of some blind, gigantic doom.

Suddenly the silence wavered
Like a light mist in the wind,
For a voice broke gently through it,
Felt like sunshine by the blind,
And the dread, like mist in sunshine,
Furled serenely from her mind.

"Once my love, my love forever, —
Flesh or spirit still the same ;
If I missed the hour of trysting,
Do not think my faith to blame,
I, alas, was made a captive,
As from Holy Land I came.

"On a green spot in the desert,
Gleaming like an emerald star,

Where a palm-tree, in lone silence,
 Yearning for its mate afar,
 Droops above a silver tunnel,
 Slender as a scimitar, —

“There thou ’lt find the humble postern
 To the castle of my foe ;
 If thy love burn clear and faithful,
 Strike the gateway, green and low,
 Ask to enter, and the warder
 Surely will not say thee no.”

Slept again the aspen silence,
 But her loneliness was o’er ;
 Round her heart a motherly patience
 Wrapt its arms forevermore ;
 From her soul ebb’d back the sorrow,
 Leaving smooth the golden shore.

Donned she now the pilgrim scallop,
 Took the pilgrim staff in hand ;
 Like a cloud-shade, fitting eastward,
 Wandered she o’er sea and land ;
 And her footsteps in the desert
 Fell like cool rain on the sand.

Soon, beneath the palm-tree’s shadow,
 Knelt she at the postern low ;
 And thereat she knocketh gently,
 Fearing much the warder’s no ;
 All her heart stood still and listened,
 As the door swung backward slow.

There she saw no surly warder
 With an eye like bolt and bar ;
 Through her soul a sense of music
 Throbb’d, — and, like a guardian
 Lar,
 On the threshold stood an angel,
 Bright and silent as a star.

Fairest seem’d he of God’s seraphs,
 And her spirit, lily-wise,
 Blossom’d when he turn’d upon her
 The deep welcome of his eyes,
 Sending upward to that sunlight
 All its dew for sacrifice.

Then she heard a voice come onward
 Singing with a rapture new,
 As Eve heard the songs in Eden,
 Dropping earthward with the dew ;
 Well she knew the happy singer,
 Well the happy song she knew.

Forward leaped she o’er the threshold,
 Eager as a glancing surf ;
 Fell from her the spirit’s languor,
 Fell from her the body’s scurf ; —
 ’Neath the palm next day some Arabs
 Found a corpse upon the turf.

THE BIRCH-TREE.

RIPPLING through thy branches goes
 the sunshine,
 Among thy leaves that palpitate for-
 ever ;

Ovid in thee a pining Nymph had pris-
 oned,
 The soul once of some tremulous in-
 land river,

Quivering to tell her woe, but, ah !
 dumb, dumb forever !

While all the forest, witch’d with
 slumberous moonshine,
 Holds up its leaves in happy, happy
 silence,

Waiting the dew, with breath and pulse
 suspended, —

I hear afar thy whispering, gleamy
 islands,
 And track thee wakeful still amid the
 wide-hung silence.

Upon the brink of some wood-nestled
 lakelet,

Thy foliage, like the tresses of a Dryad,
 Dripping about thy slim white stem,
 whose shadow

Slopes quivering down the water’s
 dusky quiet,

Thou shrink’st as on her bath’s edge
 would some startled Dryad.

Thou art the go-between of rustic lovers ;
 Thy white bark has their secrets in its
 keeping ;

Reuben writes here the happy name of
 Patience,
 And thy lithe boughs hang murmuring
 and weeping

Above her, as she steals the mystery
 from thy keeping.

Thou art to me like my beloved maiden,
 So frankly coy, so full of trembly confi-
 dences ;

Thy shadow scarce seems shade, thy
pattering leaflets
Sprinkle their gathered sunshine o'er
my senses,
And Nature gives me all her summer
confidences.

Whether my heart with hope or sorrow
tremble,
Thou sympathizest still; wild and un-
quiet,
I fling me down; thy ripple, like river,
Flows valleyward, where calmness is,
and by it
My heart is floated down into the land
of quiet.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MILES STANDISH.

I SAT one evening in my room,
In that sweet hour of twilight
When blended thoughts, half light, half
gloom,
Throng through the spirit's skylight;
The flames by fits curled round the bars,
Or up the chimney crinkled,
While embers dropped like falling stars,
And in the ashes tinkled.

I sat and mused; the fire burned low,
And, o'er my senses stealing,
Crept something of the ruddy glow
That bloomed on wall and ceiling;
My pictures (they are very few, —
The heads of ancient wise men)
Smoothed down their knotted fronts,
and grew
As rosy as excisemen.

My antique high-backed Spanish chair
Felt thrills through wood and leather,
That had been strangers since whilere,
'Mid Andalusian leather,
The oak that made its sturdy frame
His happy arms stretched over
The ox whose fortunate hide became
The bottom's polished cover.

It came out in that famous bark
That brought our sires intrepid,
Capacious as another ark
For furniture decrepit; —

For, as that saved of bird and beast
A pair for propagation,
So has the seed of these increased
And furnished half the nation.

Kings sit, they say, in slippery seats:
But those slant precipices
Of ice the northern voyager meets
Less slippery are than this is:
To cling therein would pass the wit
Of royal man or woman,
And whatsoe'er can stay in it
Is more or less than human.

I offer to all hoers this perch,
Dear well-intentioned people
With heads as void as week-day church,
Tongues longer than the steeple;
To folks with missions, whose gaunt
eyes
See golden ages rising, —
Salt of the earth! in what queer Guys
Thou 'rt fond of crystallizing!

My wonder, then, was not unmixed
With merciful suggestion,
When, as my roving eyes grew fixed
Upon the chair in question,
I saw its trembling arms enclose
A figure grim and rusty,
Whose doublet plain and plainer hose
Were something worn and dusty.

Now even such men as Nature forms
Merely to fill the street with,
Once turned to ghosts by hungry worms,
Are serious things to meet with;
Your penitent spirits are no jokes,
And, though I'm not averse to
A quiet shade, even they are folks
One cares not to speak first to.

Who knows, thought I, but he has come,
By Charon kindly ferried,
To tell me of a mighty sum
Behind my wainscot buried?
There is a buccaneerish air
About that garb outlandish —
Just then the ghost drew up his chair
And said, "My name is Standish.

"I come from Plymouth, deadly bored
With toasts, and songs, and speeches,
As long and flat as my old sword,
As threadbare as my breeches:

They understand us Pilgrims ! they,
Smooth men with rosy faces,
Strength's knots and gnarls all pared
away,
And varnish in their places !

" We had some toughness in our grain,
The eye to rightly see us is
Not just the one that lights the brain
Of drawing-room Tyrtæuses :
They talk about their Pilgrim blood,
Their birthright high and holy ! —
A mountain-stream that ends in mud
Methinks is melancholy.

" He had stiff knees, the Puritan,
That were not good at bending ;
The homespun dignity of man
He thought was worth defending ;
He did not, with his pinchbeck ore,
His country's shame forgotten,
Gild Freedom's coffin o'er and o'er,
When all within was rotten.

" These loud ancestral boasts of yours,
How can they else than vex us ?
Where were your dinner orators
When slavery grasped at Texas ?
Dumb on his knees was every one
That now is bold as Cæsar, —
Mere pegs to hang an office on
Such stalwart men as these are."

" Good sir," I said, " you seem much
stirred ;

The sacred compromises —"
" Now God confound the dastard word !
My gall thereat arises :
Northward it hath this sense alone,
That you, your conscience blinding,
Shall bow your fool's nose to the stone,
When slavery feels like grinding.

" 'Tis shame to see such painted sticks
In Vane's and Winthrop's places,
To see your spirit of Seventy-six
Drag humbly in the traces,
With slavery's lash upon her back,
And herds of office-holders
To shout applause, as, with a crack,
It peels her patient shoulders.

" *We* forefathers to such a rout ! —
No, by my faith in God's word !"

Half rose the ghost, and half drew out
The ghost of his old broadsword,
Then thrust it slowly back again,
And said, with reverent gesture,
" No, Freedom, no ! blood should not
stain
The hem of thy white vesture.

" I feel the soul in me draw near
The mount of prophesying ;
In this bleak wilderness I hear
A John the Baptist crying ;
Far in the east I see upleap
The streaks of first forewarning,
And they who sowed the light shall reap
The golden sheaves of morning.

" Child of our travail and our woe,
Light in our day of sorrow,
Through my rapt spirit I foreknew
The glory of thy morrow ;
I hear great steps, that through the shade
Draw nigher still and nigher,
And voices call like that which bade
The prophet come up higher."

I looked, no form mine eyes could find,
I heard the red cock crowing,
And through my window-chinks the
wind

A dismal tune was blowing ;
Thought I, My neighbor Buckingham
Hath somewhat in him gritty,
Some Pilgrim-stuff that hates all sham,
And he will print my ditty.

ON THE CAPTURE OF CERTAIN FUGITIVE SLAVES NEAR WASHINGTON.

Look on who will in apathy, and stifle
they who can,
The sympathies, the hopes, the words,
that make man truly man ;
Let those whose hearts are dungeoned
up with interest or with ease
Consent to hear with quiet pulse of
loathsome deeds like these !

I first drew in New England's air, and
from her hardy breast
Sucked in the tyrant-hating milk that
will not let me rest ;

And if my words seem treason to the
dullard and the tame,
'T is but my Bay-State dialect, — our
fathers spake the same !

Shame on the costly mockery of piling
stone on stone
To those who won our liberty, the
heroes dead and gone,
While we look coldly on, and see law-
shielded ruffians slay
The men who fain would win their own,
the heroes of to-day !

Are we pledged to craven silence? O,
fling it to the wind,
The parchment wall that bars us from
the least of human kind, —
That makes us cringe and temporize,
and dumbly stand at rest,
While Pity's burning flood of words is
red-hot in the breast !

Though we break our fathers' promise,
we have nobler duties first ;
The traitor to Humanity is the traitor
most accursed ;
Man is more than Constitutions ; better
rot beneath the sod,
Than be true to Church and State while
we are doubly false to God !

We owe allegiance to the State ; but
deeper, truer, more,
To the sympathies that God hath set
within our spirit's core ; —
Our country claims our fealty ; we grant
it so, but then
Before Man made us citizens, great
Nature made us men.

He's true to God who's true to man ;
wherever wrong is done,
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath
the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us ; and
they are slaves most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves,
and not for all their race.

God works for all. Ye cannot hem the
hope of being free
With parallels of latitude, with moun-
tain-range or sea.

Put golden padlocks on Truth's lips, be
callous as ye will,
From soul to soul, o'er all the world,
leaps one electric thrill.

Chain down your slaves with ignorance,
ye cannot keep apart,
With all your craft of tyranny, the hu-
man heart from heart :
When first the Pilgrims landed on the
Bay State's iron shore,
The word went forth that slavery should
one day be no more.

Out from the land of bondage 't is de-
creed our slaves shall go,
And signs to us are offered, as erst to
Pharaoh ;
If we are blind, their exodus, like Is-
rael's of yore,
Though a Red Sea is doomed to be,
whose surges are of gote.

'T is ours to save our brethren, with
peace and love to win
Their darkened hearts from error, ere
they harden it to sin ;
But if before his duty man with listless
spirit stands,
Ere long the Great Avenger takes the
work from out his hands.

TO THE DANDELION.

DEAR common flower, that grow'st
beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless
gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride,
uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed
that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample
round
May match in wealth, — thou art
more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-
blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the
 Spanish prow
 Through the primeval hush of Indian
 seas,
 Nor wrinkled the lean brow
 Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease ;
 'T is the spring's largess, which she
 scatters now
 To rich and poor alike, with lavish
 hand,
 Though most hearts never under-
 stand
 To take it at God's value, but pass by
 The offered wealth with unrewarded
 eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy ;
 To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime ;
 The eyes thou givest me
 Are in the heart, and heed not space or
 time :

Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed
 bee
 Feels a more summer-like warm ravish-
 ment

In the white lily's breezy tent,
 His fragrant Sybaris, than I, when
 first
 From the dark green thy yellow
 circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the
 grass,—
 Of meadows where in sun the cattle
 graze,

Where as the breezes pass,
 The gleaming rushes lean a thousand
 ways,—

Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy
 mass,
 Or whiten in the wind,— of waters
 blue

That from the distance sparkle
 through
 Some woodland gap,— and of a sky
 above,
 Where one white cloud like a stray
 lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are
 linked with thee ;
 The sight of thee calls back the robin's
 song,
 Who, from the dark old tree

Beside the door, sang clearly all day
 long,

And I, secure in childish piety,
 Listened as if I heard an angel sing
 With news from heaven, which he
 could bring

Fresh every day to my untainted ears
 When birds and flowers and I were
 happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
 When thou, for all thy gold, so com-
 mon art !

Thou teachest me to deem
 More sacredly of every human heart,
 Since each reflects in joy its scanty
 gleam

Of heaven, and could some wondrous
 secret show,

Did we but pay the love we owe,
 And with a child's undoubting wis-
 dom look

On all these living pages of God's
 book.

THE GHOST-SEER.

YE who, passing graves by night,
 Glance not to the left nor right,
 Lest a spirit should arise,
 Cold and white, to freeze your eyes,
 Some weak phantom, which your doubt
 Shapes upon the dark without
 From the dark within, a guess
 At the spirit's deathlessness,
 Which ye entertain with fear
 In your self-built dungeon here,
 Where ye sell your God-given lives
 Just for gold to buy you gyves,—
 Ye without a shudder meet
 In the city's noonday street,
 Spirits sadder and more dread
 Than from out the clay have fled,
 Buried, beyond hope of light,
 In the body's haunted night !

See ye not that woman pale ?
 There are bloodhounds on her trail !
 Bloodhounds two, all gaunt and lean,—
 For the soul their scent is keen,—
 Want and Sin, and Sin is last,—
 They have followed far and fast ;

Want gave tongue, and, at her howl,
 Sin awakened with a growl.
 Ah, poor girl! she had a right
 To a blessing from the light,
 Title-deeds to sky and earth
 God gave to her at her birth,
 But, before they were enjoyed,
 Poverty had made them void,
 And had drunk the sunshine up
 From all nature's ample cup,
 Leaving her a first-born's share
 In the dregs of darkness there.
 Often, on the sidewalk bleak,
 Hungry, all alone, and weak,
 She has seen, in night and storm,
 Rooms o'erflow with firelight warm,
 Which, outside the window-glass,
 Doubled all the cold, alas!
 Till each ray that on her fell
 Stabbed her like an icicle,
 And she almost loved the wail
 Of the bloodhounds on her trail.
 Till the floor becomes her bier,
 She shall feel their pantings near,
 Close upon her very heels,
 Spite of all the din of wheels;
 Shivering on her pallet poor,
 She shall hear them at the door
 Whine and scratch to be let in,
 Sister bloodhounds, Want and Sin!

Hark! that rustle of a dress,
 Stiff with lavish costliness!
 Here comes one whose cheek would
 flush

But to have her garment brush
 'Gainst the girl whose fingers thin
 Wove the weary broidery in,
 Bending backward from her toil,
 Lest her tears the silk might soil,
 And, in midnight's chill and murk,
 Stitched her life into the work,
 Shaping from her bitter thought
 Heart's-ease and forget-me-not,
 Satirizing her despair
 With the emblems woven there.
 Little doth the wearer heed
 Of the heart-break in the brede;
 A hyena by her side
 Skulks, down-looking, — it is Pride.
 He digs for her in the earth,
 Where lie all her claims of birth,
 With his foul paws rooting o'er
 Some long-buried ancestor,

Who, perhaps, a statue won
 By the ill deeds he had done,
 By the innocent blood he shed,
 By the desolation spread
 Over happy villages,
 Blotting out the smile of peace.

There walks Judas, he who sold
 Yesterday his Lord for gold,
 Sold God's presence in his heart
 For a proud step in the mart;
 He hath dealt in flesh and blood, —
 At the bank his name is good,
 At the bank, and only there,
 'T is a marketable ware.
 In his eyes that stealthy gleam
 Was not learned of sky or stream,
 But it has the cold, hard glint
 Of new dollars from the mint.
 Open now your spirit's eyes,
 Look through that poor clay disguise
 Which has thickened, day by day,
 Till it keeps all light at bay,
 And his soul in pitchy gloom
 Gropes about its narrow tomb,
 From whose dank and slimy walls
 Drop by drop the horror falls.
 Look! a serpent lank and cold
 Hugs his spirit fold on fold;
 From his heart, all day and night,
 It doth suck God's blessed light.
 Drink it will, and drink it must,
 Till the cup holds naught but dust;
 All day long he hears it hiss,
 Writhing in its fiendish bliss;
 All night long he sees its eyes
 Flicker with foul ecstasies,
 As the spirit ebbs away
 Into the absorbing clay.

Who is he that skulks, afraid
 Of the trust he has betrayed,
 Shuddering if perchance a gleam
 Of old nobleness should stream
 Through the pent, unwholesome room,
 Where his shrunk soul cowers in
 gloom, —

Spirit sad beyond the rest
 By more instinct for the best?
 'T is a poet who was sent
 For a bad world's punishment,
 By compelling it to see
 Golden glimpses of 'To Be,
 By compelling it to hear

Songs that prove the angels near ;
 Who was sent to be the tongue
 Of the weak and spirit-wrung,
 Whence the fiery-winged Despair
 In men's shrinking eyes might flare.
 'T is our hope doth fashion us
 To base use or glorious :
 He who might have been a lark
 Of Truth's morning, from the dark
 Raining down melodious hope
 Of a freer, broader scope,
 Aspirations, prophecies,
 Of the spirit's full sunrise,
 Chose to be a bird of night,
 Which, with eyes refusing light,
 Hooted from some hollow tree
 Of the world's idolatry.
 'T is his punishment to hear
 Flutterings of pinions near,
 And his own vain wings to feel
 Drooping downward to his heel,
 All their grace and import lost,
 Burdening his weary ghost :
 Ever walking by his side
 He must see his angel guide,
 Who at intervals doth turn
 Looks on him so sadly stern,
 With such ever-new surprise
 Of hushed anguish in her eyes,
 That it seems the light of day
 From around him shrinks away,
 Or drops blunted from the wall
 Built around him by his fall.
 Then the mountains, whose white peaks
 Catch the morning's earliest streaks,
 He must see, where prophets sit,
 Turning east their faces lit,
 Whence, with footsteps beautiful,
 To the earth, yet dim and dull,
 They the glad some tidings bring
 Of the sunlight's hastening :
 Never can these hills of bliss
 Be o'erclimbed by feet like his !

But enough ! O, do not dare
 From the next the veil to tear,
 Woven of station, trade, or dress,
 More obscene than nakedness,
 Wherewith plausible culture drapes
 Fallen Nature's myriad shapes !
 Let us rather love to mark
 How the unextinguished spark
 Will shine through the thin disguise
 Of our customs, poms, and lies,

And, not seldom blown to flame,
 Vindicate its ancient claim.

1844.

STUDIES FOR TWO HEADS.

I.

SOME sort of heart I know is hers, —
 I chanced to feel her pulse one night ;
 A brain she has that never errs,
 And yet is never nobly right ;
 It does not leap to great results,
 But, in some corner out of sight,
 Suspects a spot of latent blight,
 And, o'er the impatient infinite,
 She bargains, haggles, and consults.

Her eye, — it seems a chemic test
 And drops upon you like an acid ;
 It bites you with unconscious zest,
 So clear and bright, so coldly placid ;
 It holds you quietly aloof,
 It holds, — and yet it does not win
 you ;
 It merely puts you to the proof
 And sorts what qualities are in you ;
 It smiles, but never brings you nearer,
 It lights, — her nature draws not nigh ;
 'T is but that yours is growing clearer
 To her assays ; — yes, try and try,
 You 'll get no deeper than her eye.

There, you are classified : she 's gone
 Far, far away into herself ;
 Each with its Latin label on,
 Your poor components, one by one,
 Are laid upon their proper shelf
 In her compact and ordered mind,
 And what of you is left behind
 Is no more to her than the wind ;
 In that clear brain, which, day and night,
 No movement of the heart e'er jostles,
 Her friends are ranged on left and
 right, —
 Here, silix, hornblende, sienite ;
 There, animal remains and fossils.

And yet, O subtle analyst,
 That canst each property detect
 Of mood or grain, that canst untwist
 Each tangled skein of intellect,
 And with thy scalpel eyes lay bare

Each mental nerve more fine than
air, —

O brain exact, that in thy scales
Canst weigh the sun and never err,
For once thy patient science fails,
One problem still defies thy art ; —
Thou never canst compute for her
The distance and diameter
Of any simple human heart.

II.

HEAR him but speak, and you will feel
The shadows of the Portico
Over your tranquil spirit steal,
To modulate all joy and woe
To one subdued, subduing glow ;
Above our squabbling business-hours,
Like Phidian Jove's, his beauty lowers,
His nature satirizes ours ;
A form and front of Attic grace,
He shames the higgling market-place,
And dwarfs our more mechanic powers.

What throbbing verse can fitly render
That face, — so pure, so trembling-tender ?

Sensation glimmers through its rest,
It speaks unmanacled by words,
As full of motion as a nest
That palpitates with unfledged birds ;
'T is likest to Bethesda's stream,
Forewarned through all its thrilling
springs,

White with the angel's coming gleam,
And rippled with his fanning wings.

Hear him unfold his plots and plans,
And larger destinies seem man's ;
You conjure from his glowing face
The omen of a fairer race ;

With one grand trope he boldly spans
The gulf wherein so many fall,
'T wixt possible and actual ;

His first swift word, talaria-shod,
Exuberant with conscious God,
Out of the choir of planets blots
The present earth with all its spots.

Himself unshaken as the sky,
His words, like whirlwinds, spin on high
Systems and creeds pellmell together ;
'T is strange as to a deaf man's eye,
While trees uprooted splinter by,
The dumb turmoil of stormy weather ;
Less of iconoclast than shaper,

His spirit, safe behind the reach
Of the tornado of his speech,
Burns calmly as a glowworm's taper.

So great in speech, but, ah ! in act
So overrun with vermin troubles,
The coarse, sharp-cornered, ugly fact
Of life collapses all his bubbles :
Had he but lived in Plato's day,
He might, unless my fancy errs,
Have shared that golden voice's sway
O'er barefooted philosophers.
Our nipping climate hardly suits
The ripening of ideal fruits :
His theories vanquish us all summer,
But winter makes him dumb and
dumber ;

To see him 'mid life's needful things
Is something painfully bewildering ;
He seems an angel with clipt wings
Tied to a mortal wife and children,
And by a brother seraph taken
In the act of eating eggs and bacon.
Like a clear fountain, his desire
Exults and leaps toward the light,
In every drop it says "Aspire !" —
Striving for more ideal height ;
And as the fountain, falling thence,
Crawls baffled through the common
gutter,

So, from his speech's eminence,
He shrinks into the present tense,
Unkinged by foolish bread and butter.

Yet smile not, worldling, for in deeds
Not all of life that's brave and wise is ;
He strews an ampler future's seeds,
'T is your fault if no harvest rises ;
Smooth back the sneer ; for is it naught
That all he is and has is Beauty's ?
By soul the soul's gains must be
wrought,

The Actual claims our coarser thought,
The Ideal hath its higher duties.

ON A PORTRAIT OF DANTE
BY GIOTTO.

CAN this be thou who, lean and pale,
With such immitigable eye
Didst look upon those writhing souls in
bale,
And note each vengeance, and pass by

Unmoved, save when thy heart by
chance

Cast backward one forbidden glance,
And saw Francesca, with child's glee,
Subdue and mount thy wild-horse
knee

And with proud hands control its fiery
prance?

With half-drooped lids, and smooth,
round brow,

And eye remote, that inly sees
Fair Beatrice's spirit wandering now
In some sea lulled Hesperides,
Thou movest through the jarring street,
Secluded from the noise of feet
By her gift-blossom in thy hand,
Thy branch of palm from Holy
Land;—

No trace is here of ruin's fiery sleet.

Yet there is something round thy lips
That prophesies the coming doom,
The soft, gray herald-shadow ere the
eclipse

Notches the perfect disk with gloom; ;
A something that would banish thee,
And thine untamed pursuer be,
From men and their unworthy fates,
Though Florence had not shut her
gates,

And Grief had loosed her clutch and let
thee free.

Ah! he who follows fearlessly
The beckonings of a poet-heart
Shall wander, and without the world's
decree,

A banished man in field and mart ;
Harder than Florence' walls the bar
Which with deaf sternness holds him far
From home and friends, till death's
release,

And makes his only prayer for peace,
Like thine, scarred veteran of a lifelong
war!

ON THE DEATH OF A
FRIEND'S CHILD.

DEATH never came so nigh to me be-
fore,

Nor showed me his mild face : oft had
I mused

Of calm and peace and deep forgetful-
ness,

Of folded hands, closed eyes, and heart
at rest,

And slumber sound beneath a flowery
turf,

Of faults forgotten, and an inner place
Kept sacred for us in the heart of
friends ;

But these were idle fancies, satisfied
With the mere husk of this great mys-
tery,

And dwelling in the outward shows of
things.

Heaven is not mounted to on wings of
dreams,

Nor doth the unthankful happiness of
youth

Aim thitherward, but floats from bloom
to bloom,

With earth's warm patch of sunshine
well content :

'Tis sorrow builds the shining ladder up,
Whose golden rounds are our calami-
ties,

Whereon our firm feet planting, nearer
God

The spirit climbs, and hath its eyes un-
sealed.

True is it that Death's face seems stern
and cold,

When he is sent to summon those we
love,

But all God's angels come to us dis-
guised ;

Sorrow and sickness, poverty and death,
One after other lift their frowning
masks,

And we behold the seraph's face be-
neath,

All radiant with the glory and the calm
Of having looked upon the front of
God.

With every anguish of our earthly part
The spirit's sight grows clearer ; this
was meant

When Jesus touched the blind man's
lids with clay.

Life is the jailer, Death the angel sent
To draw the unwilling bolts and set us
free.

He flings not ope the ivory gate of
Rest, —

Only the fallen spirit knocks at that, —
 But to benigner regions beckons us,
 To destinies of more rewarded toil.
 In the hushed chamber, sitting by the
 dead,
 It grates on us to hear the flood of life
 Whirl rustling onward, senseless of our
 loss.
 The bee hums on ; around the blos-
 somed vine
 Whirs the light humming-bird ; the
 cricket chirps ;
 The locust's shrill alarm stings the
 ear ;
 Hard by, the cock shouts lustily ; from
 farm to farm,
 His cheery brothers, telling of the sun,
 Answer, till far away the joyance dies :
 We never knew before how God had
 filled
 The summer air with happy living
 sounds ;
 All round us seems an overplus of life,
 And yet the one dear heart lies cold and
 still.
 It is most strange, when the great mir-
 acle
 Hath for our sakes been done, when
 we have had
 Our inwardest experience of God,
 When with his presence still the room
 expands,
 And is awed after him, that naught is
 changed,
 That Nature's face looks unacknowl-
 edging,
 And the mad world still dances heed-
 less on
 After its butterflies, and gives no sign.
 'T is hard at first to see it all aright :
 In vain Faith blows her trump to sum-
 mon back
 Her scattered troop : yet, through the
 clouded glass
 Of our own bitter tears, we learn to
 look
 Undazzled on the kindness of God's
 face ;
 Earth is too dark, and Heaven alone
 shines through.

 It is no little thing, when a fresh soul
 And a fresh heart, with their unmeas-
 ured scope

For good, not gravitating earthward
 yet,
 But circling in diviner periods,
 Are sent into the world,—no little thing,
 When this unbounded possibility
 Into the outer silence is withdrawn.
 Ah, in this world, where every guiding
 thread
 Ends suddenly in the one sure centre,
 death,
 The visionary hand of Might-have-been
 Alone can fill Desire's cup to the brim !
 How changed, dear friend, are thy part
 and thy child's !
 He bends above *thy* cradle now, or
 holds
 His warning finger out to be thy guide ;
 'Thou art the nursling now ; he watches
 thee
 Slow learning, one by one, the secret
 things
 Which are to him used sights of every
 day ;
 He smiles to see thy wondering glances
 con
 The grass and pebbles of the spirit-
 world,
 To thee miraculous ; and he will teach
 Thy knees their due observances of
 prayer.
 Children are God's apostles, day by day
 Sent forth to preach of love, and hope,
 and peace ;
 Nor hath thy babe his mission left un-
 done.
 To me, at least, his going hence hath
 given
 Serener thoughts and nearer to the
 skies,
 And opened a new fountain in my heart
 For thee, my friend, and all : and O,
 if Death
 More near approaches meditates, and
 clasps
 Even now some dearer, more reluctant
 hand,
 God, strengthen thou my faith, that I
 may see
 That 't is thine angel, who, with loving
 haste,
 Unto the service of the inner shrine,
 Doth waken thy beloved with a kiss

EURYDICE.

HEAVEN'S cup held down to me I drain,
The sunshine mounts and spurs my
brain ;

Bathing in grass, with thirsty eye
I suck the last drop of the sky ;
With each hot sense I draw to the lees
The quickening out-door influences,
And empty to each radiant comer
A supernaculum of summer :
Not, Bacchus, all thy grosser juice
Could bring enchantment so profuse,
Though for its press each grape-bunch
had

The white feet of an Oread.

Through our coarse art gleam, now and
then,

The features of angelic men :
'Neath the lewd Satyr's veiling paint
Gloweth the Sibyl, Muse, or Saint ;
The dauber's botch no more obscures
The mighty master's portraitures.
And who can say what luckier beam
The hidden glory shall redeem,
For what chance clod the soil may
wait

To stumble on its nobler fate,
Or why, to his unwarned abode,
Still by surprises comes the God ?
Some moment, nailed on sorrow's cross,
May meditate a whole youth's loss,
Some windfall joy, we know not whence,
Redeem a lifetime's rash expense,
And, suddenly wise, the soul may mark,
Stripped of their simulated dark,
Mountains of gold that pierce the sky,
Girdling its valleyed poverty.

I feel ye, childhood's hopes, return,
With olden heats my pulses burn, —
Mine be the self-forgetting sweep,
The torrent impulse swift and wild,
Wherewith Taghkanic's rockborn child
Dares gloriously the dangerous leap,
And, in his sky-descended mood,
Transmutes each drop of sluggish blood,
By touch of bravery's simple wand,
To amethyst and diamond,
Proving himself no bastard slip,
But the true granite-cradled one,
Nursed with the rock's primeval drip,
The cloud-embracing mountain's son !

Prayer breathed in vain ! no wish's
sway

Rebuilds the vanished yesterday ;
For plated wares of Sheffield stamp
We gave the old Aladdin's lamp ;
'T is we are changed : ah, whither went
That undesigned abandonment,
That wise, unquestioning content,
Which could erect its microcosm
Out of a weed's neglected blossom,
Could call up Arthur and his peers
By a low moss's clump of spears,
Or, in its shingle trireme launched,
Where Charles in some green inlet
branched,

Could venture for the golden fleece
And dragon-watched Hesperides,
Or, from its ripple-shattered fate,
Ulysses' chances re-create ?

When, heralding life's every phase,
There glowed a goddess-veiling haze,
A plenteous, forewarning grace,
Like that more tender dawn that flies
Before the full moon's ample rise ?
Methinks thy parting glory shines
Through yonder grove of singing pines ;
At that elm-vista's end I trace
Dimly thy sad leave-taking face,
Eurydice ! Eurydice !
The tremulous leaves repeat to me
Eurydice ! Eurydice !
No gloomier Orcus swallows thee
Than the unclouded sunset's glow ;
Thine is at least Elysian woe ;
Thou hast Good's natural decay,
And fadest like a star away
Into an atmosphere whose shine
With fuller day o'ermasters thine,
Entering defeat as 't were a shrine ;
For us, — we turn life's diary o'er
To find but one word, — Nevermore.

1845.

SHE CAME AND WENT.

As a twig trembles, which a bird
Lights on to sing, then leaves un-
bent,
So is my memory thrilled and
stirred ; —
I only know she came and went.

As clasps some lake, by gusts unruven,
 The blue dome's measureless content,
 So my soul held that moment's heaven ;—
 I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift spring
 heaps
 The orchards full of bloom and scent,
 So clove her May my wintry sleeps ;—
 I only know she came and went.

An angel stood and met my gaze,
 Through the low doorway of my tent ;
 The tent is struck, the vision stays ;—
 I only know she came and went.

O, when the room grows slowly dim,
 And life's last oil is nearly spent,
 One gush of light these eyes will brim,
 Only to think she came and went.

THE CHANGELING.

I HAD a little daughter,
 And she was given to me
 To lead me gently backward
 To the Heavenly Father's knee,
 That I, by the force of nature,
 Might in some dim wise divine
 The depth of his infinite patience
 To this wayward soul of mine.

I know not how others saw her,
 But to me she was wholly fair,
 And the light of the heaven she came
 from
 Still lingered and gleamed in her
 hair ;
 For it was as wavy and golden,
 And as many changes took,
 As the shadows of sun-gilt ripples
 On the yellow bed of a brook.

To what can I liken her smiling
 Upon me, her kneeling lover,
 How it leaped from her lips to her eye-
 lids,
 And dimpled her wholly over,
 Till her outstretched hands smiled also,
 And I almost seemed to see

The very heart of her mother
 Sending sun through her veins to
 me !

She had been with us scarce a twelve-
 month,
 And it hardly seemed a day,
 When a troop of wandering angels
 Stole my little daughter away ;
 Or perhaps those heavenly Zingari
 But loosed the hampering strings,
 And when they had opened her cage-
 door,
 My little bird used her wings.

But they left in her stead a changeling,
 A little angel child,
 That seems like her bud in full blossom,
 And smiles as she never smiled :
 When I wake in the morning, I see it
 Where she always used to lie,
 And I feel as weak as a violet
 Alone 'neath the awful sky.

As weak, yet as trustful also ;
 For the whole year long I see
 All the wonders of faithful Nature
 Still worked for the love of me ;
 Winds wander, and dews drip earth-
 ward,
 Rain falls, suns rise and set,
 Earth whirls, and all but to prosper
 A poor little violet.

This child is not mine as the first was,
 I cannot sing it to rest,
 I cannot lift it up fatherly
 And bliss it upon my breast ;
 Yet it lies in my little one's cradle
 And sits in my little one's chair,
 And the light of the heaven she's gone
 to
 Transfigures its golden hair.

THE PIONEER.

WHAT man would live confined with
 brick and stone,
 Imprisoned from the influences of
 air,
 And cramped with selfish land-
 marks everywhere,

When all before him stretches, furrow-
less and lone,
The unmapped prairie none can fence
or own ?

What man would read and read the
selfsame faces,
And, like the marbles which the
windmill grinds,
Rub smooth forever with the same
smooth minds,
This year retracing last year's, every
year's, dull traces,
When there are woods and un-man-
stified places ?

What man o'er one old thought
would pore and pore,
Shut like a book between its cov-
ers thin
For every fool to leave his dog's-
ears in,
When solitude is his, and God forever-
more,
Just for the opening of a paltry door ?

What man would watch life's oozy
element
Creep Letheward forever, when he
might
Down some great river drift be-
yond men's sight,
To where the undethroned forest's
royal tent
Broods with its hush o'er half a con-
tinent ?

What man with men would push and
altercate,
Piecing out crooked means for
crooked ends,
When he can have the skies and
woods for friends,
Snatch back the rudder of his undis-
mantled fate,
And in himself be ruler, church, and
state ?

Cast leaves and feathers rot in last
year's nest,
The winged brood, flown thence,
new dwellings plan ;
The serf of his own Past is not a
man ;

To change and change is life, to move
and never rest ; —
Not what we are, but what we hope,
is best.

The wild, free woods make no man
halt or blind ;
Cities rob men of eyes and hands
and feet,
Patching one whole of many in-
complete ;
The general preys upon the individual
mind,
And each alone is helpless as the
wind.

Each man is some man's servant ;
every soul
Is by some other's presence quite
discrowned ;
Each owes the next through all the
imperfect round,
Yet not with mutual help ; each man is
his own goal,
And the whole earth must stop to pay
his toll.

Here, life the undiminished man de-
mands ;
New faculties stretch out to meet
new wants ;
What Nature asks, that Nature
also grants ;
Here man is lord, not drudge, of eyes
and feet and hands,
And to his life is knit with hourly
bands.

Come out, then, from the old thoughts
and old ways,
Before you harden to a crystal cold
Which the new life can shatter, but
not mould ;
Freedom for you still waits, still, look-
ing backward, stays,
But widens still the irretrievable
space.

LONGING.

OF all the myriad moods of mind
That through the soul come thronging,
Which one was e'er so dear, so kind,
So beautiful as Longing ?

The thing we long for, that we are
 For one transcendent moment,
 Before the Present poor and bare
 Can make its sneering comment.

Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
 Glows down the wished Ideal,
 And Longing moulds in clay what Life
 Carves in the marble Real ;
 To let the new life in, we know,
 Desire must ope the portal ;—
 Perhaps the longing to be so
 Helps make the soul immortal.

Longing is God's fresh heavenward will
 With our poor earthward striving ;
 We quench it that we may be still
 Content with merely living ;
 But, would we learn that heart's full
 scope
 Which we are hourly wronging,
 Our lives must climb from hope to hope
 And realize our longing.

Ah ! let us hope that to our praise
 Good God not only reckons
 The moments when we tread his ways,
 But when the spirit beckons, —
 That some slight good is also wrought
 Beyond self-satisfaction,
 When we are simply good in thought,
 Howe'er we fail in action.

ODE TO FRANCE.

FEBRUARY, 1848.

I.

As, flake by flake, the beetling ava-
 lanches
 Build up their imminent crags of
 noiseless snow,
 Till some chance thrill the loosened
 ruin launches
 And the blind havoc leaps unwarned
 below,
 So grew and gathered through the silent
 years
 The madness of a People, wrong by
 wrong.
 There seemed no strength in the dumb
 toiler's tears, —
 No strength in suffering ; — but the
 Past was strong :

The brute despair of trampled centuries
 Leaped up with one hoarse yell and
 snapped its bands,
 Groped for its right with horny,
 callous hands,
 And stared around for God with blood-
 shot eyes.
 What wonder if those palms were all
 too hard
 For nice distinctions, — if that mænad
 throng —
 They whose thick atmosphere no bard
 Had shivered with the lightning of his
 song,
 Brutes with the memories and desires
 of men,
 Whose chronicles were writ with iron
 pen,
 In the crooked shoulder and the
 forehead low —
 Set wrong to balance wrong,
 And physicked woe with woe ?

II.

They did as they were taught ; not
 theirs the blame,
 If men who scattered firebrands reape
 the flame :
 They trampled Peace beneath their
 savage feet,
 And by her golden tresses drew
 Mercy along the pavement of the
 street.
 O Freedom ! Freedom ! is thy morn-
 ing-dew
 So gory red ? Alas, thy light had
 ne'er
 Shone in upon the chaos of their
 lair !
 They reared to thee such symbol as
 they knew,
 And worshipped it with flame and
 blood,
 A Vengeance, axe in hand, that
 stood
 Holding a tyrant's head up by the
 clotted hair.

III.

What wrongs the Oppressor suffered,
 these we know ;
 These have found piteous voice in
 song and prose ;

But for the Oppressed, their darkness
and their woe,
Their grinding centuries, — what
Muse had those?
Though hall and palace had nor eyes
nor ears,
Hardening a people's heart to sense-
less stone,
Thou knowest them, O Earth, that
drank their tears,
O Heaven, that heard their inarticu-
late moan!
They noted down their fetters, link by
link;
Coarse was the hand that scrawled, and
red the ink;
Rude was their score, as suits un-
lettered men, —
Notched with a headsman's axe upon
a block:
What marvel if, when came the aveng-
ing shock,
'T was Ate, not Urania, held the
pen?

IV.

With eye averted and an anguished
frown,
Loathingly glides the Muse through
scenes of strife,
Where, like the heart of Vengeance up
and down,
Throbs in its framework the blood-
muffled knife;
Slow are the steps of Freedom, but her
feet
Turn never backward: hers no bloody
glare;
Her light is calm, and innocent, and
sweet,
And where it enters there is no de-
spair:
Not first on palace and cathedral
spire
Quivers and gleams that unconsuming
fire;
While these stand black against her
morning skies,
The peasant sees it leap from peak to
peak
Along his hills; the craftsman's burn-
ing eyes
Own with cool tears its influence moth-
er-meek;

It lights the poet's heart up like a
star; —
Ah! while the tyrant deemed it still
afar,
And twined with golden threads his
futile snare,
That swift, convicting glow all round
him ran;
'T was close beside him there,
Sunrise whose Memnon is the soul of
man.

V.

O Broker-King, is this thy wisdom's
fruit?
A dynasty plucked out as 't were a
weed
Grown rankly in a night, that leaves
no seed!
Could eighteen years strike down no
deeper root?
But now thy vulture eye was turned
on Spain, —
A shout from Paris, and thy crown
falls off,
Thy race has ceased to reign,
And thou become a fugitive and scoff:
Slippery the feet that mount by
stairs of gold,
And weakest of all fences one of
steel; —
Go and keep school again like him
of old,
The Syracusan tyrant; — thou mayst
feel
Royal amid a birch-swayed common-
weal!

VI.

Not long can he be ruler who allows
His time to run before him; thou
wast naught
Soon as the strip of gold about thy
brows
Was no more emblem of the People's
thought:
Vain were thy bayonets against the
foe
Thou hadst to cope with; thou didst
wage
War not with Frenchmen merely; —
no,
Thy strife was with the Spirit of the
Age,

The invisible Spirit whose first breath
 divine
 Scattered thy frail endeavor,
 And, like poor last year's leaves,
 whirled thee and thine
 Into the Dark forever !

VII.

Is here no triumph? Nay, what
 though
 The yellow blood of Trade meanwhile
 should pour
 Along its arteries a shrunken flow,
 And the idle canvas droop around the
 shore?
 These do not make a state,
 Nor keep it great;
 I think God made
 The earth for man, not trade;
 And where each humblest human crea-
 ture
 Can stand, no more suspicious or
 afraid,
 Erect and kingly in his right of nature,
 To heaven and earth knit with harmo-
 nious ties, —
 Where I behold the exultation
 Of manhood glowing in those eyes
 That had been dark for ages, —
 Or only lit with bestial loves and
 rages —
 There I behold a Nation:
 The France which lies
 Between the Pyrenees and Rhine
 Is the least part of France;
 I see her rather in the soul whose shine
 Burns through the craftsman's grimy
 countenance,
 In the new energy divine
 Of Toil's enfranchised glance.

VIII.

And if it be a dream, —
 If the great Future be the little Past
 'Neath a new mask, which drops and
 shows at last
 The same weird, mocking face to
 balk and blast, —
 Yet, Muse, a gladder measure suits the
 theme,
 And the Tyrtæan harp
 Loves notes more resolute and
 sharp,

Throbbing, as throbs the bosom, hot
 and fast:

Such visions are of morning,
 Theirs is no vague forewarning,
 The dreams which nations dream come
 true,

And shape the world anew;
 If this be a sleep,
 Make it long, make it deep,
 O Father, who sendest the harvest
 men reap!

While Labor so sleepeth
 His sorrow is gone,
 No longer he weepeth,
 But smileth and steepeth
 His thoughts in the dawn;
 He heareth Hope yonder
 Rain, lark-like, her fancies,
 His dreaming hands wander
 'Mid heart's-ease and pansies;
 " 'T is a dream! 'T is a vision!"
 Shrieks Mammon aghast;
 "The day's broad derision
 Will chase it at last;
 Ye are mad, ye have taken
 A slumbering kraken
 For firm land of the Past!"
 Ah! if he awaken,
 God shield us all then,
 If this dream rudely shaken
 Shall cheat him again!

IX.

Since first I heard our North wind
 blow,
 Since first I saw Atlantic throw
 On our fierce rocks his thunderous
 snow,
 I loved thee, Freedom; as a boy
 The rattle of thy shield at Marathon
 Did with a Grecian joy
 Through all my pulses run;
 But I have learned to love thee now
 Without the helm upon thy gleaming
 brow,
 A maiden mild and undefiled
 Like her who bore the world's redeem-
 ing child;
 And surely never did thy altars glance
 With purer fires than now in France;
 While, in their bright white flashes,
 Wrong's shadow, backward cast,
 Waves cowering o'er the ashes
 Of the dead, blaspheming Past,

O'er the shapes of fallen giants,
 His own unburied brood,
 Whose dead hands clench defiance
 At the overpowering Good :
 And down the happy future runs a flood
 Of prophesying light ;
 It shows an Earth no longer stained
 with blood,
 Blossom and fruit where now we see the
 bud
 Of Brotherhood and Right.

 ANTI-APIS.

PRAISEST Law, friend? We, too, love
 it much as they that love it best ;
 'Tis the deep, august foundation, where-
 on Peace and Justice rest ;
 On the rock primeval, hidden in the
 Past its bases be,
 Block by block the endeavoring Ages
 built it up to what we see.

But dig down : the Old unbury ; thou
 shalt find on every stone
 That each Age hath carved the symbol
 of what god to them was known.
 Ugly shapes and brutish sometimes,
 but the fairest that they knew ;
 If their sight were dim and earthward,
 yet their hope and aim were true.

Surely as the unconscious needle feels
 the far-off loadstar draw,
 So strives every gracious nature to
 at-one itself with law ;
 And the elder Saints and Sages laid
 their pious framework right
 By a theocratic instinct covered from
 the people's sight.

As their gods were, so their laws were ;
 'Thor the strong could reave and
 steal,
 So through many a peaceful inlet tore
 the Norseman's eager keel ;
 But a new law came when Christ came,
 and not blameless, as before,
 Can we, paying him our lip-tithes, give
 our lives and faiths to 'Thor.

Law is holy : ay, but what law? Is
 there nothing more divine
 Than the patched-up broils of Con-
 gress, — venal, full of meat and
 wine?

Is there, say you, nothing higher?
 Naught, God save us! that tran-
 scends

Laws of cotton texture, wove by vulgar
 men for vulgar ends?

Did Jehovah ask their counsel, or sub-
 mit to them a plan,
 Ere he filled with loves, hopes, long-
 ings, this aspiring heart of man?
 For their edict does the soul wait, ere it
 swing round to the pole
 Of the true, the free, the God-willed,
 all that makes it be a soul?

Law is holy ; but not your law, ye who
 keep the tablets whole
 While ye dash the Law to pieces, shat-
 ter it in life and soul ;
 Bearing up the Ark is lightsome, golden
 Apis hid within,
 While we Levites share the offerings,
 richer by the people's sin.

Give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's? yes,
 but tell me, if you can,
 Is this superscription Cæsar's here upon
 our brother man?
 Is not here some other's image, dark
 and sullied though it be,
 In this fellow-soul that worships, strug-
 gles Godward even as we?

It was not to such a future that the May-
 flower's prow was turned ;
 Not to such a faith the martyrs clung,
 exulting as they burned ;
 Not by such laws are men fashioned,
 earnest, simple, valiant, great
 In the household virtues whereon rests
 the unconquerable state.

Ah! there is a higher gospel, overhead
 the God-roof springs,
 And each glad, obedient planet like a
 golden shuttle sings
 'Through the web which Time is weav-
 ing in his never-resting loom, —
 Weaving seasons many-colored, bring-
 ing prophecy to doom.

Think you Truth a farthing rushlight,
to be pinched out when you will
With your deft official fingers, and your
politicians' skill?
Is your God a wooden fetish, to be hid-
den out of sight
That his block eyes may not see you do
the thing that is not right?

But the Destinies think not so; to their
judgment-chamber lone
Comes no noise of popular clamor,
there Fame's trumpet is not blown;
Your majorities they reckon not;— that
you grant, but then you say
That you differ with them somewhat, —
which is stronger, you or they?

Patient are they as the insects that
build islands in the deep;
They hurl not the bolted thunder, but
their silent way they keep;
Where they have been that we know;
where empires towered that were
not just;
Lo! the skulking wild fox scratches in
a little heap of dust.

1851.

A PARABLE.

SAID Christ our Lord, "I will go and
see
How the men, my brethren, believe in
me."
He passed not again through the gate
of birth,
But made himself known to the chil-
dren of earth.
Then said the chief priests, and rulers,
and kings,
"Behold now, the Giver of all good
things;
Go to, let us welcome with pomp and
state
Him who alone is mighty and great."

With carpets of gold the ground they
spread
Wherever the Son of Man should tread,

And in palace-chambers lofty and rare
They lodged him, and served him with
kingly fare.

Great organs surged through arches dim
Their jubilant floods in praise of him;
And in church, and palace, and judg-
ment-hall,
He saw his image high over all.

But still, wherever his steps they led,
The Lord in sorrow bent down his head,
And from under the heavy foundation-
stones,
The son of Mary heard bitter groans.

And in church, and palace, and judg-
ment-hall,
He marked great fissures that rent the
wall,
And opened wider and yet more wide
As the living foundation heaved and
sighed.

"Have ye founded your thrones and
altars, then,
On the bodies and souls of living men?
And think ye that building shall endure,
Which shelters the noble and crushes
the poor?"

"With gates of silver and bars of gold
Ye have fenced my sheep from their
Father's fold;
I have heard the dropping of their tears
In heaven these eighteen hundred
years."

"O Lord and Master, not ours the guilt,
We build but as our fathers built;
Behold thine images, how they stand,
Sovereign and sole, through all our land.

'Our task is hard, — with sword and
flame
To hold thy earth forever the same,
And with sharp crooks of steel to keep
Still, as thou leftest them, thy sheep."

Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man,
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin-

These set he in the midst of them,
 And as they drew back their garment-
 hem,
 For fear of defilement, "Lo, here,"
 said he,
 "The images ye have made of me!"

 ODE

WRITTEN FOR THE CELEBRATION OF
 THE INTRODUCTION OF THE COCHIT-
 UATE WATER INTO THE CITY OF
 BOSTON.

My name is Water: I have sped
 Through strange, dark ways, untried
 before,
 By pure desire of friendship led,
 Cochituate's ambassador;
 He sends four royal gifts by me:
 Long life, health, peace, and purity.

I'm Ceres' cup-bearer; I pour,
 For flowers and fruits and all their kin,
 Her crystal vintage, from of yore
 Stored in old Earth's selectest bin,
 Flora's Falernian ripe, since God
 The wine-press of the deluge trod.

In that far isle whence, iron-willed,
 The New World's sires their bark
 unmoored,
 The fairies' acorn-cups I filled
 Upon the toadstool's silver board,
 And, 'neath Herne's oak, for Shake-
 speare's sight,
 Strewed moss and grass with diamonds
 bright.

No fairies in the Mayflower came,
 And, lightsome as I sparkle here,
 For Mother Bay State, busy dame,
 I've toiled and drudged this many a
 year,
 Throbb'd in her engines' iron veins,
 Twirled myriad spindles for her gains.

I, too, can weave: the warp I set
 Through which the sun his shuttle
 throws,
 And, bright as Noah saw it, yet
 For you the arching rainbow glows,

A sight in Paradise denied
 To unfallen Adam and his bride.

When Winter held me in his grip,
 You seized and sent me o'er the wave,
 Ungrateful! in a prison-ship;
 But I forgive, not long a slave,
 For, soon as summer south-winds blew,
 Homeward I fled, disguised as dew.

For countless services I'm fit,
 Of use, of pleasure, and of gain,
 But lightly from all bonds I flit,
 Nor lose my mirth, nor feel a stain;
 From mill and wash-tub I escape,
 And take in heaven my proper shape.

So, free myself, to-day, elate
 I come from far o'er hill and mead,
 And here, Cochituate's envoy, wait
 To be your blithesome Gauymede,
 And brim your cups with nectar true
 That never will make slaves of you.

 LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE GRAVES OF TWO
 ENGLISH SOLDIERS ON CONCORD
 BATTLE-GROUND.

THE same good blood that now refills
 The dotard Orient's shrunken veins,
 The same whose vigor westward thrills,
 Bursting Nevada's silver chains,
 Poured here upon the April grass,
 Freckled with red the herbage new;
 On reeled the battle's trampling mass,
 Back to the ash the bluebird flew.

Poured here in vain; — that sturdy blood
 Was meant to make the earth more
 green,
 But in a higher, gentler mood
 Than broke this April noon serene;
 Twograves are here: to mark the place,
 At head and foot, an unhewn stone,
 O'er which the herald lichens trace
 The blazon of Oblivion.

These men were brave enough, and true
 To the hired soldier's bull-dog creed;
 What brought them here they never
 knew,

They fought as suits the English breed;
They came three thousand miles, and
died,

To keep the Past upon its throne;
Unheard, beyond the ocean tide,
Their English mother made her moan.

The turf that covers them no thrill
Sends up to fire the heart and brain;
No stronger purpose nerves the will,
No hope renews its youth again;
From farm to farm the Concord glides,
And trails my fancy with its flow;
O'erhead the balanced hen-hawk slides,
Twinned in the river's heaven below.

But go, whose Bay State bosom stirs,
Proud of thy birth and neighbor's right,
Where sleep the heroic villagers
Borne red and stiff from Concord fight;
Thought Reuben, snatching down his
gun,
Or Seth, as ebb'd the life away,
What earthquake rifts would shoot and
run
World-wide from that short April fray?

What then? With heart and hand they
wrought,
According to their village light;
'T was for the Future that they fought,
Their rustic faith in what was right.
Upon earth's tragic stage they burst
Unsummoned, in the humble sock;
Theirs the fifth act; the curtain first
Rose long ago on Charles's block.

Their graves have voices; if they threw
Dice charged with fates beyond their
ken,

Yet to their instincts they were true,
And had the genius to be men.
Fine privilege of Freedom's host,
Of even foot-soldiers for the Right! —
For centuries dead, ye are not lost,
Your graves send courage forth, and
might.

—

O —

WE, too, have autumns, when our leaves
Drop loosely through the dampened
air,

When all our good seems v'nd in
sheaves,
And we stand reaped and bare.

Our seasons have no fixed returns,
Without our will they come and go;
At noon our sudden summer burns,
Ere sunset all is snow.

But each day brings less summer cheer,
Crimps more our ineffectual spring,
And something earlier every year
Our singing birds take wing.

As less the olden glow abides,
And less the chillier heart aspires,
With drift-wood beached in past spring-
tides
We light our sullen fires.

By the pinched rushlight's starving
beam
We cower and strain our wasted sight,
To stitch youth's shroud up, seam by
seam,
In the long arctic night.

It was not so — we once were young —
When Spring, to womanly Summer
turning,
Her dew-drops on each grass-blade
strung,
In the red sunrise burning.

We trusted then, aspired, believed
That earth could be remade to-mor-
row; —

Ah, why be ever undeceived?
Why give up faith for sorrow?

O thou, whose days are yet all spring,
Faith, blighted once, is past retriev-
ing;

Experience is a dumb, dead thing;
The victory's in believing.

—

FREEDOM.

ARE we, then, wholly fallen? Can it be
That thou, North wind, that from thy
mountains bringest
Their spirit to our plains, and thou,
blue sea,

Who on our rocks thy wreaths of freedom flingest,
 As on an altar, — can it be that ye
 Have wasted inspiration on dead ears,
 Dulled with the too familiar clank of chains?
 The people's heart is like a harp for years
 Hung where some petrifying torrent rains
 Its slow-incrusting spray: the stiffened chords
 Faint and more faint make answer to the tears
 That drip upon them: idle are all words.
 Only a silver plectrum wakes the tone
 Deep buried 'neath that ever-thickening stone.

We are not free: Freedom doth not consist
 In musing with our faces toward the Past,
 While petty cares, and crawling interests, twist
 Their spider-threads about us, which at last
 Grow strong as iron chains, to cramp and bind
 In formal narrowness heart, soul, and mind.
 Freedom is recreated year by year,
 In hearts wide open on the Godward side,
 In souls calm-cadenced as the whirling sphere,
 In minds that sway the future like a tide.
 No broadest creeds can hold her, and no codes;
 She chooses men for her august abodes,
 Building them fair and fronting to the dawn;
 Yet, when we seek her, we but find a few
 Light footprints, leading morn-ward through the dew:
 Before the day had risen, she was gone.

And we must follow: swiftly runs she on,
 And, if our steps should slacken in despair,
 Half turns her face, half smiles through golden hair,

Forever yielding, never wholly won:
 That is not love which pauses in the race
 Two close-linked names on fleeting sand to trace:
 Freedom gained yesterday is no more ours;
 Men gather but dry seeds of last year's flowers;
 Still there 's a charm ungranted, still a grace,
 Still rosy Hope, the free, the unattained,
 Makes us Possession's languid hand let fall;
 'T is but a fragment of ourselves is gained, —
 The Future brings us more, but never all.

And, as the finder of some unknown realm,
 Mounting a summit whence he thinks to see
 On either side of him the imprisoning sea,
 Beholds, above the clouds that overwhelm
 The valley-land, peak after snowy peak
 Stretch out of sight, each like a silver helm
 Beneath its plume of smoke, sublime and bleak,
 And what he thought an island finds to be
 A continent to him first oped, — so we
 Can from our height of Freedom look along
 A boundless future, ours if we be strong;
 Or if we shrink, better remount our ships
 And, fleeing God's express design, trace back
 The hero-freighted Mayflower's prophetic-track
 To Europe, entering her blood-red eclipse.

BIBLIOLATRES.

BOWING thyself in dust before a Book,
 And thinking the great God is thine alone,
 O rash iconoclast, thou wilt not brook

What gods the heathen carves in wood
and stone,

As if the Shepherd who from outer cold
Leads all his shivering lambs to one
sure fold

Were careful for the fashion of his
crook.

There is no broken reed so poor and
base,

No rush, the bending tilt of swamp-fly
blue,

But he therewith the ravening wolf
can chase,

And guide his flock to springs and
pastures new ;

Through ways unlooked for, and
through many lands,

Far from the rich folds built with hu-
man hands,

The gracious footprints of his love I
trace.

And what art thou, own brother of the
clod,

That from his hand the crook would
snatch away

And shake instead thy dry and sapless
rod,

To scare the sheep out of the whole-
some day ?

Yea, what art thou, blind, unconverted
Jew,

That with thy idol-volume's covers two
Wouldst make a jail to coop the living
God ?

Thou hear'st not well the mountain
organ-tones

By prophet ears from Hor and Sinai
caught,

Thinking the cisterns of those He-
brew brains

Drew dry the springs of the All-know-
er's thought,

Nor shall thy lips be touched with liv-
ing fire,

Who blow'st old altar-coals with sole
desire

To weld anew the spirit's broken
chains.

God is not dumb, that he should speak
no more ;

If thou hast wanderings in the wilder-
ness

And find'st not Sinai, 't is thy soul is
poor ;

There towers the mountain of the
Voice no less,

Which whoso seeks shall find, but he
who bends,

Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered
lore.

Slowly the Bible of the race is writ,
And not on paper leaves nor leaves of
stone ;

Each age, each kindred, adds a verse
to it,

Texts of despair or hope, of joy or
moan.

While swings the sea, while mists the
mountains shroud,

While thunder's surges burst on cliffs
of cloud,

Still at the prophets' feet the nations
sit.

BEAVER BROOK.

HUSHED with broad sunlight lies the
hill,

And, minuting the long day's loss,
The cedar's shadow, slow and still,

Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss.

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup.
The aspen's leaves are scarce astir ;

Only the little mill sends up
Its busy, never-ceasing burr.

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems
The road along the mill-pond's brink,

From 'neath the arching barberry-
stems,

My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood
The mill's red door lets forth the din ;

The whitened miller, dust-imbued,
Flits past the square of dark within.

No mountain torrent's strength is here.
Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,

Heaps its small pitcher to the ear,
And gently waits the miller's will.

Swift slips Undine along the race
Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,
Floods the dull wheel with light and
grace,
And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge
round.

The miller dreams not at what cost
The quivering millstones hum and
whirl,
Nor how for every turn are tost
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl.

But Summer cleared my happier eyes
With drops of some celestial juice,
To see how Beauty underlies,
Forevermore each form of Use.

And more : methought I saw that flood,
Which now so dull and darkling steals,

Thick, here and there, with human
blood,
To turn the world's laborious wheels.

No more than doth the miller there,
Shut in our several cells, do we
Know with what waste of beauty rare
Moves every day's machinery.

Surely the wiser time shall come
When this fine overplus of might,
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,
Shall leap to music and to light.

In that new childhood of the Earth
Life of itself shall dance and play,
Fresh blood in Time's shrunk veins
make mirth,
And labor meet delight half-way.

MEMORIAL VERSES.

KOSSUTH. ♀

A RACE of nobles may die out,
A royal line may leave no heir ;
Wise Nature sets no guards about
Her pewter plate and wooden ware.

But they fail not, the kinglier breed,
Who starry diadems attain ;
To dungeon, axe, and stake succeed
Heirs of the old heroic strain.

The zeal of Nature never cools,
Nor is she thwarted of her ends :
When gapped and dulled her cheaper
tools,
Then she a saint and prophet spends.

Land of the Magyars ! though it be
The tyrant may relink his chain,
Already thine the victory,
As the just Future measures gain.

Thou hast succeeded, thou hast won
The deathly travail's amplest worth,
A nation's duty thou hast done,
Giving a hero to our earth.

And he, let come what will of woe,
Has saved the land he strove to save ;
'No Cossack hordes, no traitor's blow,
Can quench the voice shall haunt his
grave.

" I Kossuth am : O Future, thou
That clear'st the just and blott'st the
vile,
O'er this small dust in reverence bow,
Remembering what I was erewhile.

" I was the chosen trump wherethrough
Our God sent forth awakening breath :
Came chains ? Came death ? The strain
He blew
Sounds on, outliving chains and death."

TO LAMARTINE.

1848.

I DID not praise thee when the crowd,
'Witched with the moment's in-
spiration,
Vexed thy still ether with hosannas
loud,

And stamped their dusty adoration ;
I but looked upward with the rest,
And, when they shouted Greatest,
whispered Best.

They raised thee not, but rose to thee,
Their fickle wreaths about thee
flinging ;

Soon some marble Phœbus the high sea
Might leave his worthless seaweed
clinging,

But pious hands, with reverent care,
Make the pure limbs once more sub-
limely bare.

Now thou 'rt thy plain, grand self again,
Thou art secure from panegyric, —
Thou who gav'st politics an epic strain,
And actedst Freedom's noblest
lyric ;

This side the Blessed Isles, no tree
Grows green enough to make a wreath
for thee.

Nor can blame cling to thee ; the snow
From swinish footprints takes no
staining,

But, leaving the gross soils of earth
below,
Its spirit mounts, the skies regain-
ing,

And unresenting falls again,
To beautify the world with dews and
rain.

The highest duty to mere man vouch-
safed

Was laid on thee, — out of wild
chaos,

When the roused popular ocean foamed
and chafed,

And vulture War from his Imaus
Snuffed blood, to summon homely
Peace,

And show that only order is release.

To carve thy fullest thought, what
though

Time was not granted? Aye in
history,

Like that Dawn's face which baffled
Angelo

Left shapeless, grander for its
mystery,

Thy great Design shall stand, and day
Flood its blind front from Oriens far
away.

Who says thy day is o'er? Control.

My heart, that bitter first emotion ;
While men shall reverence the steadfast
soul,

The heart in silent self-devotion
Breaking, the mild, heroic mien,
Thou 'lt need no prop of marble, La-
martine.

If France reject thee, 't is not thine,
But her own, exile that she utters ;
Ideal France, the deathless, the divine,
Will be where thy white pennon
flutters,

As once the nobler Athens went
With Aristides into banishment.

No fitting meteward hath To-day
For measuring spirits of thy
stature, —

Only the Future can reach up to lay
The laurel on that lofty nature, —
Bard, who with some diviner art
Has touched the bard's true lyre, a
nation's heart.

Swept by thy hand, the gladdened
chords,

Crashed now in discords fierce by
others,

Gave forth one note beyond all skill of
words,

And chimed together, We are
brothers.

O poem unsurpassed ! it ran
All round the world, unlocking man to
man.

France is too poor to pay alone
The service of that ample spirit ;
Paltry seem low dictatorship and throne,
If balanced with thy simple merit.

They had to thee been rust and loss ;
Thy aim was higher, — thou hast
climbed a Cross.

TO JOHN G. PALFREY.

THERE are who triumph in a losing
cause,
Who can put on defeat, as 't were a
wreath

Unwithering in the adverse popular
breath,
Safe from the blasting demagogue's
applause ;
'T is they who stand for Freedom and
God's laws.

And so stands Palfrey now, as Marvell
stood,
Loyal to Truth dethroned, nor could be
wooed

To trust the playful tiger's velvet
paws :
And if the second Charles brought in
decay

Of ancient virtue, if it well might wring
Souls that had broadened 'neath a
nobler day,

To see a losel, marketable king
Fearfully watering with his realm's best
blood

Cromwell's quenched bolts, that erst
had cracked and flamed,
Scaring, through all their depths of
courtier mud,

Europe's crowned bloodsuckers, —
how more ashamed
Ought we to be, who see Corruption's
flood

Still rise o'er last year's mark, to mine
away
Our brazen idols' feet of treacherous
clay !

Utter degradation ! Freedom turned
Slavery's vile bawd, to cozen and
betray

To the old lecher's clutch a maiden
prey,

If so a loathsome pander's fee be earned !
And we are silent, — we who daily
tread

A soil sublime, at least, with heroes'
graves ! —

Beckon no more, shades of the noble
dead !

Be dumb, ye heaven-touched lips of
winds and waves !

Or hope to rouse some Coptic dullard,
hid

Ages ago, wrapt stiffly, fold on fold,
With cerements close, to wither in the
cold

Forever hushed, and sunless pyramid !

Beauty and Truth, and all that these
contain,
Drop not like ripened fruit about our
feet ;

We climb to them through years of
sweat and pain ;
Without long struggle, none did e'er
attain

The downward look from Quiet's bliss-
ful seat :

Though present loss may be the hero's
part,

Yet none can rob him of the victor
heart

Whereby the broad-realmed future is
subdued,

And Wrong, which now insults from
triumph's car,

Sending her vulture hope to raven far,
Is made unwilling tributary of Good.

O Mother State, how quenched thy
Sinai fires !

Is there none left of thy stanch May-
flower breed ?

No spark among the ashes of thy sires,
Of Virtue's altar-flame the kindling
seed ?

Are these thy great men, these that
cringe and creep,

And writhe through slimy ways to
place and power ? —

How long, O Lord, before thy wrath
shall reap

Our frail-stemmed summer prosper-
ings in their flower ?

O for one hour of that undaunted stock
That went with Vane and Sydney to
the block !

O for a whiff of Naseby, that would
sweep,

With its stern Puritan besom, all this
chaff

From the Lord's threshing-floor ! Yet
more than half

The victory is attained, when one or
two,

Through the fool's laughter and the
traitor's scorn,

Beside thy sepulchre can abide the
morn,

Crucified Truth, when thou shalt rise
anew.

TO W. L. GARRISON.

"Some time afterward, it was reported to me by the city officers that they had ferreted out the paper and its editor; that his office was an obscure hole, his only visible auxiliary a negro boy, and his supporters a few very insignificant persons of all colors."—*Letter of H. G. Otis.*

IN a small chamber, friendless and un-
seen,

Toiled o'er his types one poor, un-
learned young man;

The place was dark, unfurnished, and
mean;—

Yet there the freedom of a race began.

Help came but slowly; surely no man
yet.

Put lever to the heavy world with
less:

What need of help? He knew how
types were set,

He had a dauntless spirit, and a press.

Such earnest natures are the fiery pith,
The compact nucleus, round which
systems grow!

Mass after mass becomes inspired there-
with,

And whirls impregnate with the cen-
tral glow.

O Truth! O Freedom! how are ye still
born

In the rude stable, in the manger
nursed!

What humble hands unbar those gates
of morn

Through which the splendors of the
New Day burst!

What! shall one monk, scarce known
beyond his cell,

Front Rome's far-reaching bolts, and
scorn her frown?

Brave Luther answered YES; that
thunder's swell

Rocked Europe, and disarmed the
triple crown.

Whatever can be known of earth we
know,

Sneered Europe's wise men, in their
snail-shells curled;

No! said one man in Genoa, and that
No

Out of the dark created this New
World.

Who is it will not dare himself to trust?

Who is it hath not strength to stand
alone?

Who is it thwarts and bilks the inward
MUST?

He and his works, like sand, from
earth are blown.

Men of a thousand shifts and wiles,
look here!

See one straightforward conscience
put in pawn.

To win a world; see the obedient
sphere

Bybravery's simple gravitation drawn!

Shall we not heed the lesson taught of
old,

And by the Present's lips repeated
still,

In our own single manhood to be bold,
Fortressed in conscience and impreg-
nable will?

We stride the river daily at its spring,
Nor, in our childish thoughtlessness,

foresee

What myriad vassal streams shall trib-
ute bring,

How like an equal it shall greet the
sea.

O small beginnings, ye are great and
strong,

Based on a faithful heart and wear-
less brain!

Ye build the future fair, ye conquer
wrong,

Ye earn the crown, and wear it not in
vain.

 ON THE DEATH OF C. T.
TORREY.

Woe worth the hour when it is crime
To plead the poor dumb bondman's
cause,

When all that makes the heart sublime,
The glorious throbs that conquer time,
Are traitors to our cruel laws !

He strove among God's suffering poor
One gleam of brotherhood to send ;
The dungeon oped its hungry door
To give the truth one martyr more,
Then shut, — and here behold the
end !

O Mother State ! when this was done,
No pitying throe thy bosom gave ;
Silent thou saw'st the death-shroud
spun,
And now thou givest to thy son
The stranger's charity, — a grave.

Must it be thus forever? No !
The hand of God sows not in vain ;
Long sleeps the darkling seed below,
The seasons come, and change, and go,
And all the fields are deep with grain.

Although our brother lie asleep,
Man's heart still struggles, still as-
pires ;
His grave shall quiver yet, while deep
Through the brave Bay State's pulses
leap
Her ancient energies and fires.

When hours like this the senses' gush
Have stilled, and left the spirit room,
It hears amid the eternal hush
The swooping pinions' dreadful rush,
That bring the vengeance and the
doom ; —

Not man's brute vengeance, such as
rends
What rivets man to man apart, —
God doth not so bring round his ends,
But waits the ripened time, and sends
His mercy to the oppressor's heart.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF
DR. CHANNING.

I do not come to weep above thy pall,
And mourn the dying-out of noble
powers ;

The poet's clearer eye should see, in all
Earth's seeming woe, the seed of
Heaven's flowers.

Truth needs no champions : in the in-
finite deep
Of everlasting Soul her strength
abides,
From Nature's heart her mighty pulses
leap,
Through Nature's veins her strength,
undying, tides.

Peace is more strong than war, and
gentleness,
Where force were vain, makes con-
quest o'er the wave ;
And love lives on and hath a power to
bless ;
When they who loved are hidden in
the grave.

The sculptured marble brags of death-
strewn fields,
And Glory's epitaph is writ in blood ;
But Alexander now to Plato yields,
Clarkson will stand where Wellington
hath stood.

I watch the circle of the eternal years,
And read forever in the storied page
One lengthened roll of blood, and
wrong, and tears, —
One onward step of Truth from age
to age.

The poor are crushed ; the tyrants link
their chain ;
The poet sings through narrow dun-
geon-grates ;
Man's hope lies quenched ; — and, lo !
with steadfast gain
Freedom doth forge her mail of ad-
verse fates.

Men slay the prophets ; fagot, rack, and
cross
Make up the groaning record of the
past ;
But Evil's triumphs are her endless loss,
And sovereign Beauty wins the soul
at last.

No power can die that ever wrought for
Truth ;
Thereby a law of Nature it became,

And lives unwithered in its sinewy youth,
When he who called it forth is but a name.

Therefore I cannot think thee wholly gone ;
The better part of thee is with us still ;

Thy soul its hampering clay aside hath thrown,
And only freer wrestles with the Ill.

Thou livest in the life of all good things ;
What words thou spak'st for Freedom shall not die ;

Thou sleepest not, for now thy Love hath wings
To scar where hence thy Hope could hardly fly.

And often, from that other world, on this

Some gleams from great souls gone before may shine,
To shed on struggling hearts a clearer bliss,
And clothe the Right with lustre more divine.

Thou art not idle : in thy higher sphere
Thy spirit bends itself to loving tasks,
And strength, to perfect what it dreamed of here

Is all the crown and glory that it asks.

For sure, in Heaven's wide chambers,
there is room

For love and pity, and for helpful deeds,
Else were our summons thither but a doom

To life more vain than this in clayey weeds.

From off the starry mountain-peak of song,
Thy spirit shows me, in the coming time,

An earth unwithered by the foot of wrong,
A race revering its own soul sublime.

What wars, what martyrdoms, what crimes, may come,
Thou knowest not, nor I ; but God will lead

The prodigal soul from want and sorrow home,
And Eden ope her gates to Adam's seed.

Farewell ! good man, good angel now I this hand
Soon, like thine own, shall lose its cunning too ;

Soon shall this soul, like thine, bewildered stand,
Then leap to thread the free, unfathomed blue :

When that day comes, O, may this hand grow cold,
Busy, like thine, for Freedom and the Right ;

O, may this soul, like thine, be ever bold
To face dark Slavery's encroaching blight !

This laurel-leaf I cast upon thy bier ;
Let worthier hands than these thy wreath intwine ;

Upon thy hearse I shed no useless tear, —
For us weep rather thou in calm divine !

1842.

TO THE MEMORY OF HOOD.

ANOTHER star 'neath Time's horizon
dropped,

To gleam o'er unknown lands and seas ;

Another heart that beat for freedom
stopped, —

What mournful words are these !

O Love Divine, that claspest our tired earth,

And lullest it upon thy heart,
Thou knowest how much a gentle soul is worth

To teach men what thou art !

His was a spirit that to all thy poor
Was kind as slumber after pain :
Why ope so soon thy heaven-deep
Quiet's door
And call him home again ?

Freedom needs all her poets: it is
they

Who give her aspirations wings,
And to the wiser law of music sway
Her wild imaginings.

Yet thou hast called him, nor art thou
unkind,

O Love Divine, for 't is thy will
That gracious natures leave their love
behind

To work for Freedom still.

Let laurelled marbles weigh on other
tombs,

Let anthems peal for other dead,

Rustling the bannered depth of minster-
glooms
With their exulting spread.

His epitaph shall mock the short-lived
stone,

No lichen shall its lines efface,
He needs these few and simple lines
alone

To mark his resting-place:—

“Here lies a Poet. Stranger, if to thee
His claim to memory be obscure,
If thou wouldst learn how truly great
was he,
Go, ask it of the poor.”

SONNETS.

I.

TO A. C. L.

THROUGH suffering and sorrow thou
hast passed

To show us what a woman true may be:
They have not taken sympathy from
thee,

Nor made thee any other than thou
wast,

Save as some tree, which, in a sudden
blast,

Sheddeth those blossoms, that are
weakly grown,

Upon the air, but keepeth every one
Whose strength gives warrant of good
fruit at last:

So thou hast shed some blooms of
gayety,

But never one of steadfast cheerful-
ness;

Nor hath thy knowledge of adversity
Robbed thee of any faith in happiness,
But rather cleared thine inner eyes to
see

How many simple ways there are to
bless.

1840.

II.

WHAT were I, Love, if I were stripped
of thee,

If thine eyes shut me out whereby I
live,

Thou, who unto my calmer soul dost
give

Knowledge, and Truth, and holy Mys-
tery,

Wherein Truth mainly lies for those
who see

Beyond the earthly and the fugitive,
Who in the grandeur of the soul be-
lieve,

And only in the Infinite are free?
Without thee I were naked, bleak, and
bare

As yon dead cedar on the sea-cliff's
brow;

And Nature's teachings, which come
to me now,

Common and beautiful as light and
air,

Would be as fruitless as a stream which
still

Slips through the wheel of some old
ruined mill.

1841.

III.

I WOULD not have this perfect love of
ours
Grow from a single root, a single stem,
Bearing no goodly fruit, but only flow-
ers
That idly hide life's iron diadem :
It should grow alway like that eastern
tree
Whose limbs take root and spread forth
constantly ;
That love for one, from which there
doth not spring
Wide love for all, is but a worthless thing.
Not in another world, as poets prate,
Dwell we apart above the tide of things,
High floating o'er earth's clouds on
faery wings ;
But our pure love doth ever elevate
Into a holy bond of brotherhood
All earthly things, making them pure
and good.

1840.

IV.

" FOR this true nobleness I seek in vain,
In woman and in man I find it not ;
I almost weary of my earthly lot,
My life-springs are dried up with burn-
ing pain."
Thou find'st it not? I pray thee look
again,
Look *inward* through the depths of
thine own soul.
How is it with thee? Art thou sound
and whole?
Doth narrow search show thee no earth-
ly stain?
BE NOBLE! and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never
dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine
own ;
Then wilt thou see it gleam in many
eyes,
Then will pure light around thy path be
shed,
And thou wilt nevermore be sad and
lone

1840

V.

TO THE SPIRIT OF KEATS.

GREAT soul, thou sittest with me in my
room,
Uplifting me with thy vast, quiet eyes,
On whose full orbs, with kindly lustre,
lies
The twilight warmth of ruddy ember-
gloom :
Thy clear, strong tones will oft bring
sudden bloom
Of hope secure, to him who lonely cries,
Wrestling with the young poet's agonies,
Neglect and scorn, which seem a cer-
tain doom :
Yes! the few words which, like great
thunder-drops,
Thy large heart down to earth shook
doubtfully,
Thrilled by the inward lightning of its
might,
Serene and pure, like gushing joy of
light,
Shall track the eternal chords of Des-
tiny,
After the moon-led pulse of ocean stops.

1841.

VI.

GREAT Truths are portions of the soul
of man ;
Great souls are portions of Eternity ;
Each drop of blood that e'er through
true heart ran
With lofty message, ran for thee and
me ;
For God's law, since the starry song
began,
Hath been, and still forevermore must
be,
That every deed which shall outlast
Time's span
Must goad the soul to be erect and free ;
Slave is no word of deathless lineage
sprung, —
Too many noble souls have thought and
died,
Too many mighty poets lived and sung,
And our good Saxon, from lips purified

With martyr-fire, throughout the world
hath rung
Too long to have God's holy cause de-
nied.

1841.

VII.

I ASK not for those thoughts, that sud-
den leap
From being's sea, like the isle-seeming
Kraken,

With whose great rise the ocean all is
shaken

And a heart-tremble quivers through
the deep ;

Give me that growth which some per-
chance deem sleep,

Wherewith the steadfast coral-stems
uprise,

Which, by the toil of gathering energies,
Their upward way into clear sunshine
keep,

Until, by Heaven's sweetest influences,
Slowly and slowly spreads a speck of
green

Into a pleasant island in the seas,
Where, 'mid tall palms, the cane-roofed
home is seen,

And wearied men shall sit at sunset's
hour,

Hearing the leaves and loving God's
dear power.

1841.

VIII.

TO M. W., ON HER BIRTHDAY.

MAIDEN, when such a soul as thine is
born,

The morning-stars their ancient music
make,

And, joyful, once again their song awake,
Long silent now with melancholy scorn ;

And thou, not mindless of so blest a
morn,

By no least deed its harmony shalt
break,

But shalt to that high chime thy foot-
steps take,

Through life's most darksome passes
unforlorn ;

Therefore from thy pure faith thou shalt
not fall,

Therefore shalt thou be ever fair and
free,

And in thine every motion musical

As summer air, majestic as the sea,

A mystery to those who creep and crawl
Through Time, and part it from Eter-
nity.

1841.

IX.

MY Love, I have no fear that thou
shouldst die ;

Albeit I ask no fairer life than this,

Whose numbering-clock is still thy
gentle kiss,

While Time and Peace with hands en-
lock'd fly, —

Yet care I not where in Eternity

We live and love, well knowing that
there is

No backward step for those who feel the
bliss

Of Faith as their most lofty yearnings
high :

Love hath so purified my being's core,
Meseems I scarcely should be startled,

even,

To find, some morn, that thou hadst
gone before ;

Since, with thy love, this knowledge
too was given,

Which each calm day doth strengthen
more and more,

That they who love are but one step
from Heaven.

1841.

X.

I CANNOT think that thou shouldst pass
away,

Whose life to mine is an eternal law,

A piece of nature that can have no life's end,

A new and certain sunrise every day ;

But, if thou art to be another ray

About the Sun of Life, and art to live

Free from all of thee that was fugitive,
The debt of Love I will more fully pay,
Not downcast with the thought of thee
so high,

But rather raised to be a nobler man,
And more divine in my humanity,
As knowing that the waiting eyes which
scan

My life are lighted by a purer being,
And ask meek, calm-browed deeds,
with it agreeing.

1841.

 XI.

THERE never yet was flower fair in vain,
Let classic poets rhyme it as they will;
The seasons toil that it may blow again,
And summer's heart doth feel its every
ill;

Nor is a true soul ever born for naught;
Wherever any such hath lived and died,
There hath been something for true
freedom wrought,

Some bulwark levelled on the evil side:
Toil on, then, Greatness! thou art in
the right,

However narrow souls may call thee
wrong;

Be as thou wouldst be in thine own
clear sight,
And so thou wilt in all the world's ere-
long;

For worldlings cannot, struggle as they
may,

From man's great soul one great thought
hide away.

1841.

 XII.

SUB PONDERE CRESCIT.

THE hope of Truth grows stronger, day
by day;

I hear the soul of Man around me wak-
ing,

Like a great sea, its frozen fetters
breaking,

And flinging up to heaven its sunlit
spray,

Tossing huge continents in scornful play,
And crushing them, with din of grind-
ing thunder,

That makes old emptinesses stare in
wonder;

The memory of a glory passed away
Lingers in every heart, as, in the shell,
Resounds the bygone freedom of the sea,
And, every hour new signs of promise
tell

That the great soul shall once again be
free,

For high, and yet more high, the mur-
murs swell

Of inward strife for truth and liberty.

1841.

 XIII.

BELOVED, in the noisy city here,
The thought of thee can make all tur-
moil cease;

Around my spirit, folds thy spirit clear
Its still, soft arms, and circles it with
peace;

There is no room for any doubt or fear
In souls so overfilled with love's in-
crease,

There is no memory of the bygone year
But growth in heart's and spirit's per-
fect ease:

How hath our love, half nebulous at first,
Rounded itself into a full-orbed sun!

How have our lives and wills (as haply
erst

They were, ere this forgetfulness begun)
Through all their earthly distantness
outburst,

And melted, like two rays of light, in
one!

1842.

 XIV.

ON READING WORDSWORTH'S SON-
NETS IN DEFENCE OF CAPITAL
PUNISHMENT.

As the broad ocean endlessly upheaveth,
With the majestic beating of his heart,
The mighty tides, whereof its rightful
part

Each sea-wide bay and little weed re-
 ceiveth, —
 So, through his soul who earnestly be-
 lieveth,
 Life from the universal Heart doth flow,
 Whereby some conquest of the eternal
 Woe,
 By insting of God's nature, he achiev-
 eth :
 A fuller pulse of this all-powerful beauty
 Into the poet's gulf-like heart doth tide,
 And he more keenly feels the glorious
 duty
 Of serving Truth, despised and cruci-
 fied, —
 Happy, unknowing sect or creed, to rest
 And feel God flow forever through his
 breast.

1842.

XV.

THE SAME CONTINUED.

ONCE hardly in a cycle blossometh
 A flower-like soul ripe with the seeds of
 song,
 A spirit foreordained to cope with
 wrong,
 Whose divine thoughts are natural as
 breath,
 Who the old Darkness thickly scattereth
 With starry words, that shoot prevail-
 ing light
 Into the deeps, and wither, with the
 blight
 Of serene Truth, the coward heart of
 Death :
 Woe, if such spirit thwart its errand high,
 And mock with lies the longing soul of
 man !
 Yet one age longer must true Culture lie,
 Soothing her bitter fetters as she can,
 Until new messages of love outstart
 At the next beating of the infinite Heart.

XVI.

THE SAME CONTINUED.

THE love of all things springs from
 love of one ;
 Wider the soul's horizon hourly grows,

And over it with fuller glory flows
 The sky-like spirit of God ; a hope begun
 In doubt and darkness 'neath a fairer
 sun
 Cometh to fruitage, if it be of Truth ;
 And to the law of meekness, faith, and
 ruth,
 By inward sympathy, shall all be won :
 This thou shouldst know, who, from
 the painted feature
 Of shifting Fashion, couldst thy breth-
 ren turn
 Unto the love of ever-youthful Nature,
 And of a beauty fadeless and eterne ;
 And always 't is the saddest sight to see
 An old man faithless in Humanity.

XVII.

THE SAME CONTINUED.

A POET cannot strive for despotism ;
 His harp falls shattered ; for it still
 must be
 The instinct of great spirits to be free,
 And the sworn foes of cunning barba-
 rism :
 He, who has deepest searched the wide
 abysm
 Of that life-giving Soul which men call
 fate,
 Knows that to put more faith in lies
 and hate
 Than truth and love is the true atheism :
 Upward the soul forever turns her eyes :
 The next hour always shames the hour
 before ;
 One beauty, at its highest, prophesies
 That by whose side it shall seem mean
 and poor
 No Godlike thing knows aught of less
 and less,
 But widens to the boundless Perfectness.

XVIII.

THE SAME CONTINUED.

THEREFORE think not the Past is wise
 alone,
 For Yesterday knows nothing of the
 Best,

And thou shalt love it only as the nest
 Whence glory-wingèd things to Heaven
 have flown :
 To the great Soul alone are all things
 known ;
 Present and future are to her as past,
 While she in glorious madness doth
 forecast
 That perfect bud, which seems a flower
 full-blown
 To each new Prophet, and yet always
 opes
 Fuller and fuller with each day and hour,
 Heartening the soul with odor of fresh
 hopes,
 And longings high, and gushings of
 wide power,
 Yet never is or shall be fully blown
 Save in the forethought of the Eternal
 One.

 XIX.

THE SAME CONTINUED.

FAR 'yond this narrow parapet of Time,
 With eyes uplift, the poet's soul should
 look
 Into the Endless Promise, nor should
 brook
 One prying doubt to shake his faith
 sublime ;
 To him the earth is ever in her prime
 And dewiness of morning ; he can see
 Good lying hid, from all eternity,
 Within the teeming womb of sin and
 crime ;
 His soul should not be cramped by any
 bar,
 His nobleness should be so Godlike
 high,
 That his least deed is perfect as a star,
 His common look majestic as the sky,
 And all o'erflooded with a light from far,
 Undimmed by clouds of weak mortality.

 XX.

TO M. O. S.

MARY, since first I knew thee, to this
 hour,
 My love hath deepened, with my wiser
 sense

Of what in Woman is to reverence ;
 Thy clear heart, fresh as e'er was forest-
 flower,
 Still opens more to me its beauteous
 dower ; —
 But let praise hush, — Love asks no
 evidence
 To prove itself well-placed ; we know
 not whence
 It gleans the straws that thatch its hum-
 ble bower :
 We can but say we found it in the
 heart,
 Spring of all sweetest thoughts, arch foe
 of blame,
 Sower of flowers in the dusty mart,
 Pure vestal of the poet's holy flame, —
 This is enough, and we have done our
 part
 If we but keep it spotless as it came.

1842.

 XXI.

OUR love is not a fading, earthly
 flower:
 Its wingèd seed dropped down from
 Paradise,
 And, nursed by day and night, by sun
 and shower,
 Doth momentarily to fresher beauty
 rise :
 To us the leafless autumn is not
 bare,
 Nor winter's rattling boughs lack lusty
 green.
 Our summer hearts make summer's
 fulness, where
 No leaf, or bud, or blossom may be
 seen :
 For nature's life in love's deep life doth
 lie,
 Love, — whose forgetfulness is beauty's
 death,
 Whose mystic key these cells of Thou
 and I
 Into the infinite freedom openeth,
 And makes the body's dark and narrow
 grate
 The wind-flung leaves of Heaven's
 palace-gate.

1842.

XXII.

IN ABSENCE.

THESE rugged, wintry days I scarce
 could bear,
 Did I not know, that, in the early spring,
 When wild March winds upon their
 errands sing,
 Thou wouldst return, bursting on this
 still air,
 Like those same winds, when, startled
 from their lair,
 They hunt up violets, and free swift
 brooks,
 From icy cares, even as thy clear looks
 Bid my heart bloom, and sing, and
 break all care :
 When drops with welcome rain the
 April day,
 My flowers shall find their April in
 thine eyes,
 Save there the rain in dreamy clouds
 doth stay,
 As loath to fall out of those happy skies ;
 Yet sure, my love, thou art most like to
 May,
 That comes with steady sun when April
 dies.

1843.

XXIII.

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

HE stood upon the world's broad
 threshold ; wide
 The din of battle and of slaughter rose ;
 He saw God stand upon the weaker
 side,
 That sank in seeming loss before its
 foes ;
 Many there were who made great haste
 and sold
 Unto the cunning enemy their swords,
 He scorned their gifts of fame, and
 power, and gold,
 And, underneath their soft and flowery
 words,
 Heard the cold serpent hiss ; therefore
 he went
 And humbly joined him to the weaker
 part,

Fanatic named, and fool, yet well con-
 tent
 So he could be the nearer to God's
 heart,
 And feel its solemn pulses sending
 blood
 Through all the wide-spread veins of
 endless good.

XXIV.

THE STREET.

THEY pass me by like shadows, crowds
 on crowds,
 Dim ghosts of men, that hover to and
 fro,
 Hugging their bodies round them like
 thin shrouds
 Wherein their souls were buried long
 ago :
 They trampled on their youth, and
 faith, and love,
 They cast their hope of human-kind
 away,
 With Heaven's clear messages they
 madly strove,
 And conquered, — and their spirits
 turned to clay :
 Lo ! how they wander round the world,
 their grave,
 Whose ever-gaping maw by such is fed,
 Gibbering at living men, and idly rave,
 " We, only, truly live, but ye are dead."
 Alas ! poor fools, the anointed eye
 may trace
 A dead soul's epitaph in every face !

XXV.

I GRIEVE not that ripe Knowledge
 takes away
 The charm that Nature to my child-
 hood wore,
 For, with that insight, cometh, day by
 day,
 A greater bliss than wonder was before ;
 The real doth not clip the poet's
 wings, —
 To win the secret of a weed's plain heart

Reveals some clew to spiritual things,
 And stumbling guess becomes firm-
 footed art :
 Flowers are not flowers unto the poet's
 eyes, *
 Their beauty thrills him by an inward
 sense ;
 He knows that outward seemings are
 but lies,
 Or, at the most, but earthly shadows,
 whence
 The soul that looks within for truth
 may guess
 The presence of some wondrous heav-
 enliness.

XXVI.

TO J. R. GIDDINGS.

GIDDINGS, far rougher names than
 thine have grown
 Smoother than honey on the lips of men ;
 And thou shalt aye be honorably
 known,
 As one who bravely used his tongue
 and pen,
 As best befits a freeman, — even for
 those,
 To whom our Law's unblushing front
 denies
 A right to plead against the life-long
 woes
 Which are the Negro's glimpse of
 Freedom's skies :
 Fear nothing, and hope all things, as
 the Right
 Alone may do securely ; every hour
 The thrones of Ignorance and ancient
 Night
 Lose somewhat of their long usurp'd
 power,
 And Freedom's lightest word can make
 them shiver
 With a base dread that clings to them
 forever.

XXVII.

I THOUGHT our love at full, but I did err ;
 Joy's wreath drooped o'er mine eyes ;
 I could not see

That sorrow in our happy world must be
 Love's deepest spokesman and inter-
 preter ?
 But, as a mother feels her child first
 stir
 Under her heart, so felt I instantly
 Deep in my soul another bond to thee
 Thrill with that life we saw depart from
 her ;
 O mother of our angel child ! twice
 dear !
 Death knits as well as parts, and still,
 I wis,
 Her tender radiance shall infold us
 here,
 Even as the light, borne up by inward
 bliss,
 Threads the void glooms of space with-
 out a fear,
 To print on farthest stars her pitying
 kiss.

L'ENVOI.

WHETHER my heart hath wiser grown
 or not,
 In these three years, since I to thee
 inscribed,
 Mine own betrothed, the firstlings of
 my muse, —
 Poor windfalls of unripe experience,
 Young buds plucked hastily by child-
 ish hands
 Not patient to await more full-blown
 flowers, —
 At least it hath seen more of life and
 men,
 And pondered more, and grown a shade
 more sad ;
 Yet with no loss of hope or settled
 trust
 In the benignness of that Providence,
 Which shapes from out our elements
 awry
 The grace and order that we wonder at,
 The mystic harmony of right and
 wrong,
 Both working out His wisdom and our
 good :
 A trust, Beloved, chiefly learned of thee,
 Who hast that gift of patient tenderness,
 The instinctive wisdom of a woman's
 heart.

They tell us that our land was made
 for song,
 With its huge rivers and sky-piercing
 peaks,
 Its sealike lakes and mighty cataracts,
 Its forests vast and hoar, and prairies
 wide,
 And mounds that tell of wondrous
 tribes extinct.
 But Poesy springs not from rocks and
 woods ;
 Her womb and cradle are the human
 heart,
 And she can find a nobler theme for
 song
 In the most loathsome man that blasts
 the sight
 Than in the broad expanse of sea and
 shore
 Between the frozen deserts of the poles.
 All nations have their message from on
 high,
 Each the messiah of some central
 thought,
 For the fulfilment and delight of Man :
 One has to teach that labor is divine ;
 Another Freedom ; and another Mind ;
 And all, that God is open-eyed and
 just,
 The happy centre and calm heart of all.

 Are, then, our woods, our mountains,
 and our streams,
 Needful to teach our poets how to
 sing ?
 O maiden rare, far other thoughts were
 ours,
 When we have sat by ocean's foaming
 marge,
 And watched the waves leap roaring on
 the rocks,
 Than young Leander and his Hero had,
 Gazing from Sestos to the other shore.
 The moon looks down and ocean wor-
 ships her,
 Stars rise and set, and seasons come
 and go
 Even as they did in Homer's elder
 time,
 But we behold them not with Grecian
 eyes :
 Then they were types of beauty and of
 strength,
 But now of freedom, unconfined and
 pure,

Subject alone to Order's higher law.
 What cares the Russian serf or South-
 ern slave
 Though we should speak as man spake
 never yet
 Of gleaming Hudson's broad magnifi-
 cence,
 Or green Niagara's never-ending roar ?
 Our country hath a gospel of her own
 To preach and practise before all the
 world, —
 The freedom and divinity of man,
 The glorious claims of human brother-
 hood, —
 Which to pay nobly, as a freeman
 should,
 Gains the sole wealth that will not fly
 away, —
 And the soul's fealty to none but God.
 These are realities, which make the
 shows
 Of outward Nature, be they ne'er so
 grand,
 Seem small, and worthless, and con-
 temptible.
 These are the mountain-summits for
 our bards,
 Which stretch far upward into heaven
 itself,
 And give such wide-spread and exult-
 ing view
 Of hope, and faith, and onward des-
 tiny,
 That shrunk 'Parnassus to a molehill
 dwindles.
 Our new Atlantis, like a morning-star,
 Silvers the murk face of slow-yielding
 Night,
 The herald of a fuller truth than yet
 Hath gleamed upon the upraised face
 of Man
 Since the earth glittered in her stain-
 less prime, —
 Of a more glorious sunrise than of old
 Drew wondrous melodies from Mem-
 non huge,
 Yea, draws them still, though now he
 sits waist-deep
 In the engulfing flood of whirling sand,
 And looks across the wastes of endless
 gray,
 Sole wreck, where once his hundred-
 gated Thebes
 Pained with her mighty hum the calm,
 blue heaven :

Shall the dull stone pay grateful orisons,
 And we till noonday bar the splendor out,
 Lest it reproach and chide our sluggard hearts,
 Warm-nestled in the down of Prejudice,
 And be content, though clad with angel-wings,
 Close-clipped, to hop about from perch to perch,
 In paltry cages of dead men's dead thoughts?
 O, rather, like the skylark, soar and sing,
 And let our gushing songs besit the dawn
 And sunrise, and the yet unshaken dew
 Brimming the chalice of each full-blown hope,
 Whose blithe front turns to greet the growing day!
 Never had poets such high call before,
 Never can poets hope for higher one,
 And, if they be but faithful to their trust,
 Earth will remember them with love and joy,
 And O, far better, God will not forget.
 For he who settles Freedom's principles
 Writes the death-warrant of all tyranny;
 Who speaks the truth stabs Falsehood to the heart,
 And his mere word makes despots tremble more
 Than ever Brutus with his dagger could.
 Wait for no hints from waterfalls or woods,
 Nor dream that tales of red men, brute and fierce,
 Repay the finding of this Western World,
 Or needed half the globe to give them birth:
 Spirit supreme of Freedom! not for this
 Did great Columbus tame his eagle soul
 To jostle with the daws that perch in courts;
 Not for this, friendless, on an unknown sea,

Coping with mad waves and more mutinous spirits,
 Battled he with the dreadful ache at heart
 Which tempts, with devilish subtleties of doubt,
 The hermit of that loneliest solitude,
 The silent desert of a great New Thought;
 Though loud Niagara were to-day struck dumb,
 Yet would this cataract of boiling life
 Rush plunging on and on to endless deeps,
 And utter thunder till the world shall cease, —
 A thunder worthy of the poet's song,
 And which alone can fill it with true life.
 The high evangel to our country granted
 Could make apostles, yea, with tongues of fire,
 Of hearts half-darkened back again to clay!
 'T is the soul only that is national,
 And he who pays true loyalty to that
 Alone can claim the wreath of patriotism.

Beloved! if I wander far and oft
 From that which I believe, and feel,
 and know,
 Thou wilt forgive, not with a sorrowing heart,
 But with a strengthened hope of better things;
 Knowing that I, though often blind and false
 To those I love, and O, more false than all
 Unto myself, have been most true to thee,
 And that whoso in one thing hath been true
 Can be as true in all. Therefore thy hope
 May yet not prove unfruitful, and thy love
 Meet, day by day, with less unworthy thanks,
 Whether, as now, we journey hand in hand,
 Or, parted in the body, yet are one
 In spirit and the love of holy things.

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL.

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST.

OVER his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland
for his lay :
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws
his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes
sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie ;
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies ;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies ;
With our faint hearts the mountain
strives,
Its arms outstretched, the druid wood
Waits with its benedicite ,
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth
gives us ;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to
die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and
shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in ;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of
gold ;
For a cap and belis our lives we
pay,

Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's
tasking :

'T is heaven alone that is given away,
'T is only God may be had for the ask-
ing,
No price is set on the lavish summer ;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June ?
Then, if ever, come perfect days ;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in
tune,

And over it softly her warm ear lays :
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten ;
Every clod feels a stir of might,

An instinct within it that reaches and
towers,

And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers ;
The flush of life may well be seen

Thrilling back over hills and valleys ;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its
chalice,

And there's never a leaf nor a blade
too mean

To be some happy creature's palace ;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atitlike a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun

With the deluge of summer it re-
ceives ;

His mate feels the eggs beneath her
wings,

And the heart in her dumb breast flut-
ters and sings ;

He sings to the wide world, and she to
her nest, —

In the nice ear of Nature which song is
the best ?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away

Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
 Into every bare inlet and creek and
 bay ;
 Now the heart is so full that a drop
 overfills it,
 We are happy now because God wills
 it ;
 No matter how barren the past may
 have been,
 'Tis enough for us now that the leaves
 are green ;
 We sit in the warm shade and feel right
 well
 How the sap creeps up and the blos-
 soms swell ;
 We may shut our eyes, but we cannot
 help knowing
 That skies are clear and grass is grow-
 ing ;
 The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
 That dandelions are blossoming near,
 That maize has sprouted, that streams
 are flowing,
 That the river is bluer than the sky,
 That the robin is plastering his house
 hard by ;
 And if the breeze kept the good news
 back,
 For other couriers we should not lack ;
 We could guess it all by yon heifer's
 lowing, —
 And hark ! how clear bold chanticleer,
 Warmed with the new wine of the year,
 Tells all in his lusty crowing !

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how ;
 Everything is happy now,
 Everything is upward striving ;
 'T is as easy now for the heart to be true
 As for grass to be green or skies to be
 blue, —
 'T is the natural way of living ;
 Who knows whither the clouds have
 fled ?
 In the unscarred heaven they leave
 no wake ;
 And the eyes forget the tears they have
 shed,
 The heart forgets its sorrow and ache ;
 The soul partakes the season's youth,
 And the sulphurous rifts of passion
 and woe
 Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and
 smooth,

Like burnt-out craters healed with
 snow.
 What wonder if Sir Launfal now
 Remembered the keeping of his vow ?

PART FIRST.

I.

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
 And bring to me my richest mail,
 For to-morrow I go over land and sea
 In search of the Holy Grail ;
 Shall never a bed for me be spread,
 Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
 Till I begin my vow to keep ;
 Here on the rushes will I sleep,
 And perchance there may come a vision
 true
 Ere day create the world anew."
 Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
 Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
 And into his soul the vision flew.

II.

The crows flapped over by twos and
 threes,
 In the pool drowsed the cattle up to
 their knees,
 The little birds sang as if it were
 The one day of summer in all the
 year,
 And the very leaves seemed to sing on
 the trees :
 The castle alone in the landscape lay
 Like an outpost of winter, dull and
 gray :
 'T was the proudest hall in the North
 Countree,
 And never its gates might opened be,
 Save to lord or lady of high degree ;
 Summer besieged it on every side,
 But the churlish stone her assaults de-
 fied ;
 She could not scale the chilly wall,
 Though around it for leagues her pa-
 vilions tall
 Stretched left and right,
 Over the hills and out of sight ;
 Green and broad was every tent,
 And out of each a murmur went
 'Till the breeze fell off at night.

III.

The drawbridge dropped with a surly
 clang,
 And through the dark arch a charger
 sprang,
 Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight,
 In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
 It seemed the dark castle had gathered
 all
 Those shafts the fierce sun had shot
 over its wall
 In his siege of three hundred sum-
 mers long,
 And, binding them all in one blazing
 sheaf,
 Had cast them forth : so, young and
 strong,
 And lightsome as a locust-leaf,
 Sir Launfal flashed forth in his un-
 scarred mail,
 To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

IV.

It was morning on hill and stream and
 tree,
 And morning in the young knight's
 heart ;
 Only the castle moodily
 Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
 And gloomed by itself apart ;
 The season brimmed all other things
 up
 Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's
 cup.

V.

As Sir Launfal made morn through the
 darksome gate,
 He was 'ware of a leper, crouched
 by the same,
 Who begged with his hand and moaned
 as he sate ;
 And a loathing over Sir Launfal
 came ;
 The sunshine went out of his soul with
 a thrill,
 The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan
 shrink and crawl,
 And midway its leap his heart stood still
 Like a frozen waterfall ;
 For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
 Raped harshly against his dainty na-
 ture,

And seemed the one blot on the sum-
 mer morn, —
 So he tossed him a piece of gold in
 scorn.

VI.

The leper raised not the gold from the
 dust :
 " Better to me the poor man's crust,
 Better the blessing of the poor,
 Though I turn me empty from his door :
 That is no true alms which the hand
 can hold ;
 He gives nothing but worthless gold
 Who gives from a sense of duty ;
 But he who gives a slender mite,
 And gives to that which is out of sight,
 That thread of the all-sustaining
 Beauty
 Which runs through all and doth all
 unite, —
 The hand cannot clasp the whole of his
 alms,
 The heart outstretches its eager palms,
 For a god goes with it and makes it
 store
 To the soul that was starving in dark-
 ness before. "

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND.

Down swept the chill wind from the
 mountain peak,
 From the snow five thousand sum-
 mers old ;
 On open wold and hill-top bleak
 It had gathered all the cold,
 And whirled it like sleet on the wan-
 derer's cheek ;
 It carried a shiver everywhere
 From the unleafed boughs and pastures
 bare ;
 The little brook heard it and built a
 roof
 'Neath which he could house him, win-
 ter-proof ;
 All night by the white stars' frosty
 gleams
 He groined his arches and matched his
 beams ;
 Slender and clear were his crystal spars
 As the lashes of light that trim the
 stars :

He sculptured every summer delight
 In his halls and chambers out of sight ;
 Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
 Down through a frost-leaved forest-

crypt,
 Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed
 trees

Bending to counterfeit a breeze ;
 Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
 But silvery mosses that downward grew ;
 Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
 With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf ;
 Sometimes it was simply smooth and
 clear

For the gladness of heaven to shine
 through, and here

He had caught the nodding bulrush-

tops
 And hung them thickly with diamond
 drops,

That crystallised the beams of moon and
 sun,

And made a star of every one :
 No mortal builder's most rare device
 Could match this winter-palace of ice ;
 'T was as if every image that mirrored
 lay

In his depths serene through the sum-
 mer day,

Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
 Lest the happy model should be lost,

Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
 By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
 The cheeks of Christmas glow red
 and jolly,

And sprouting is every corbel and rafter
 With lightsome green of ivy and
 holly ;

Through the deep gulf of the chimney
 wide

Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide ;
 The broad flame-pennons droop and
 flap

And belly and tug as a flag in the
 wind ;

Like a locust shrills the imprisoned
 sap,

Hunted to death in its galleries
 blind ;

And swift little troops of silent sparks,
 Now pausing, now scattering away
 as in fear,

Go threading the soot-forest's tangled
 darks
 Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and
 sharp,

Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a
 harp,

And rattles and wrings
 The icy strings,

Singing, in dreary monotone,
 A Christmas carol of its own,
 Whose burden still, as he might
 guess,

Was— " Shelterless, shelterless, shel-
 terless ! "

The voice of the seneschal flared like a
 torch

As he shouted the wanderer away from
 the porch,

And he sat in the gateway and saw all
 night

The great hall-fire, so cheery and
 bold,

Through the window-slits of the cas-
 tle old,

Build out its piers of ruddy light
 Against the drift of the cold.

PART SECOND.

I.

THERE was never a leaf on bush or
 tree,

The bare boughs rattled shudderingly ;
 The river was numb and could not
 speak,

For the weaver Winter its shroud
 had spun ;

A single crow on the tree-top bleak
 From his shining feathers shed off
 the cold sun ;

Again it was morning, but shrunk and
 cold,

As if her veins were sapless and old,
 And she rose up decrepitiy

For a last dim look at earth and sea.

II.

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard
 gate,

For another heir in his earldom sate ;

An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
 He came back from seeking the Holy
 Grail ;
 Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
 No more on his surcoat was blazoned
 the cross,
 But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
 The badge of the suffering and the poor.

III.

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
 Was idle mail 'gainst the barbed air,
 For it was just at the Christmas time ;
 So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier
 clime,
 And sought for a shelter from cold and
 snow
 In the light and warmth of long-ago ;
 He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
 O'er the edge of the desert, black and
 small,
 Then nearer and nearer, till, one by
 one,
 He can count the camels in the sun,
 As over the red-hot sands they pass
 To where, in its slender necklace of
 grass,
 The little spring laughed and leapt in
 the shade,
 And with its own self like an infant
 played,
 And waved its signal of palms.

IV.

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an
 alms" ; —
 The happy camels may reach the
 spring,
 But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome
 thing,
 The leper, lank as the rain-blanch'd
 bone,
 That cowers beside him, a thing as
 lone
 And white as the ice-isles of Northern
 seas
 In the desolate horror of his disease.

V.

And Sir Launfal said, — "I behold in
 thee
 An image of Him who died on the
 tree ;

Thou also hast had thy crown of
 thorns, —
 Thou also hast had the world's buffets
 and scorns, —
 And to thy life were not denied
 The wounds in the hands and feet and
 side :
 Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me ;
 Behold, through him, I give to thee !"

VI.

Then the soul of the leper stood up in
 his eyes
 And looked at Sir Launfal, and
 straightway he
 Remembered in what a haughtier guise
 He had flung an alms to leprosie,
 When he girt his young life up in
 gilded mail
 And set forth in search of the Holy
 Grail.
 The heart within him was ashes and
 dust ;
 He parted in twain his single crust,
 He broke the ice on the streamlet's
 brink,
 And gave the leper to eat and drink,
 'T was a mouldy crust of coarse brown
 bread,
 'T was water out of a wooden bowl, —
 Yet with fine wheat bread was the
 leper fed,
 And 't was red wine he drank with
 his thirsty soul.

VII.

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast
 face,
 A light shone round about the place ;
 The leper no longer crouched at his side,
 But stood before him glorified,
 Shining and tall and fair and straight
 As the pillar that stood by the Beauti-
 ful Gate, —
 Himself the Gate whereby men can
 Enter the temple of God in Man.

VIII.

His words were shed softer than leaves
 from the pine,
 And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows
 on the brine,

Which mingle their softness and quiet
 in one
 With the shaggy unrest they float down
 upon ;
 And the voice that was calmer than
 silence said,
 "Lo it is I, be not afraid !
 In many climes, without avail,
 Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy
 Grail ;
 Behold, it is here, — this cup which thou
 Didst fill at the streamlet for me but
 now ;
 This crust is my body broken for thee,
 This water His blood that died on the
 tree ;
 The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
 In whatso we share with another's
 need ;
 Not what we give, but what we share, —
 For the gift without the giver is bare ;
 Who gives himself with his alms feeds
 three, —
 Himself, his hungering neighbor, and
 me "

IX.

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swoond : —
 "The Grail in my castle here is found !
 Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
 Let it be the spider's banquet-hall ;
 He must be fenced with stronger mail
 Who would seek and find the Holy
 Grail."

X.

The castle gate stands open now,
 And the wanderer is welcome to the
 hall
 As the hangbird is to the elm-tree
 bough ;

No longer scowl the turrets tall,
 The Summer's long siege at last is o'er ;
 When the first poor outcast went in at
 the door,
 She entered with him in disguise,
 And mastered the fortress by surprise ;
 There is no spot she loves so well on
 ground,
 She lingers and smiles there the whole
 year round ;
 The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
 Has hall and bower at his command ;
 And there 's no poor man in the North
 Countree
 But is lord of the earldom as much as
 he.

NOTE. — According to the mythology of
 the Romancers, the *San Greal*, or *Holy Grail*,
 was the cup out of which Jesus partook of
 the last supper with his disciples. It was
 brought into England by Joseph of Arima-
 thea, and remained there, an object of pil-
 grimage and adoration, for many years in
 the keeping of his lineal descendants. It
 was incumbent upon those who had charge
 of it to be chaste in thought, word, and
 deed ; but one of the keepers having broken
 this condition, the *Holy Grail* disappeared.
 From that time it was a favorite enterprise
 of the knights of Arthur's court to go in
 search of it. Sir Galahad was at last suc-
 cessful in finding it, as may be read in the
 seventeenth book of the *Romance of King*
Arthur. Tennyson has made Sir Galahad
 the subject of one of the most exquisite of
 his poems.

The plot (if I may give that name to any-
 thing so slight) of the foregoing poem is my
 own, and, to serve its purposes, I have en-
 larged the circle of competition in search of
 the miraculous cup in such a manner as to in-
 clude, not only other persons than the heroes
 of the *Round Table*, but also a period of
 time subsequent to the date of King Arthur's
 reign !

READER! *walk up at once (it will soon be too late)*
and buy at a perfectly ruinous rate

A

FABLE FOR CRITICS;

OR, BETTER,

*(I like, as a thing that the reader's first fancy may strike,
an old-fashioned title-page,
such as presents a tabular view of the volume's contents,)*

A GLANCE

AT A FEW OF OUR LITERARY PROGENIES

(Mrs. Malaprop's word)

FROM

THE TUB OF DIOGENES;

A VOCAL AND MUSICAL MEDLEY,

THAT IS,

A SERIES OF JOKES

By A Wonderful Quiz,

*who accompanies himself with a rub-a-dub-dub, full of spirit and grace,
on the top of the tub.*

Set forth in October, the 31st day,
In the year '48, G. P. Putnam. Broadway.

TO

CHARLES F. BRIGGS,

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

IT being the commonest mode of procedure, I premise a few candid remarks

TO THE READER:—

This trifle, begun to please only myself and my own private fancy, was laid on the shelf. But some friends, who had seen it, induced me, by dint of saying they liked it, to put it in print. That is, having come to that very conclusion, I consulted them when it could make no confusion. For (though in the gentlest of ways) they had hinted it was scarce worth the while, I should doubtless have printed it.

I began it, intending a Fable, a frail, slender thing, rhyme-ywinged, with a sting in its tail. But, by additions and alterings not previously planned,— digressions chance-hatched, like birds' eggs in the sand,—and dawdlings to suit every whimsey's demand (always freeing the bird which I held in my hand, for the two perched, perhaps out of reach, in the tree),—it grew by degrees to the size which you see. I was like the old woman that carried the calf, and my neighbors, like hers, no doubt, wonder and laugh, and when, my strained arms with their grown burthen full, I call it my Fable, they call it a bull.

Having scrawled at full gallop (as far as that goes) in a style that is neither good verse nor bad prose, and being a person whom nobody knows, some people will say I am rather more free with my readers than it is becoming to be, that I seem to expect them to wait on my leisure in following wherever I wander at pleasure, that, in short, I take more than a young author's lawful ease, and laugh in a queer way so like *Mephistopheles*, that the public will doubt,

as they grope through my rhythm, if in truth I am making fun *at* them or *with* them.

So the excellent Public is hereby assured that the sale of my book is already secured. For there is not a poet throughout the whole land but will purchase a copy or two out of hand, in the fond expectation of being amused in it, by seeing his betters cut up and abused in it. Now, I find, by a pretty exact calculation, there are something like ten thousand bards in the nation, of that special variety whom the Review and Magazine critics call *lofty* and *true*, and about thirty thousand (*this* tribe is increasing) of the kinds who are termed *full of promise* and *pleasing*. The Public will see by a glance at this schedule, that they cannot expect me to be over-sedulous about courting *them*, since it seems I have got enough fuel made sure of for boiling my pot.

As for such of our poets as find not their names mentioned once in my pages, with praises or blames, let them SEND IN THEIR CARDS, without further DELAY, to my friend G. P. PUTNAM, Esquire, in Broadway, where a LIST will be kept with the strictest regard to the day and the hour of receiving the card. Then, taking them up as I chance to have time (that is, if their names can be twisted in rhyme), I will honestly give each his PROPER POSITION, at the rate of ONE AUTHOR to each NEW EDITION. Thus a PREMIUM is offered sufficiently HIGH (as the magazines say when they tell their best lie) to induce bards to CLUB their resources and buy the balance of every edition, until they have all of them fairly been run through the mill.

One word to such readers (judicious

and wise) as read books with something behind the mere eyes, of whom in the country, perhaps, there are two, including myself, gentle reader, and you. All the characters sketched in this slight *jeu d'esprit*, though, it may be, they seem, here and there, rather free, and drawn from a Mephistophelian stand-point, are *meant* to be faithful, and that is the grand point, and none but an owl would feel sore at a rub from a jester who tells you, without any subterfuge, that he sits in Diogenes' tub.

A PRELIMINARY NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION,

though it well may be reckoned, of all composition, the species at once most delightful and healthy, is a thing which an author, unless he be wealthy and willing to pay for that kind of delight, is not, in all instances, called on to write. Though there are, it is said, who, their spirits to cheer, slip in a new title-page three times a year, and in this way snuff up an imaginary savor of that sweetest of dishes, the popular favor, — much as if a starved painter should fall to and treat the Ugolino inside to a picture of meat.

You remember (if not, pray turn over and look) that, in writing the preface which ushered my book, I treated you, excellent Public, not merely with a cool disregard, but downright cavalierly. Now I would not take back the least thing I then said, though I thereby could butter both sides of my bread, for I never could see that an author owed ought to the people he solaced, diverted, or taught; and, as for mere fame, I have long ago learned that the persons by whom it is finally earned are those with whom *your* verdict weighed not a pin, unsustained by the higher court sitting within.

But I wander from what I intended to say, — that you have, namely, shown such a liberal way of thinking, and so much æsthetic perception of anonymous worth in the handsome reception

you gave to my book, spite of some private piques (having bought the first thousand in barely two weeks), that I think, past a doubt, if you measured the phiz of yours most devotedly, Wonderful Quiz, you would find that its vertical section was shorter, by an inch and two tenths, or 'twixt that and a quarter.

You have watched a child playing — in those wondrous years when belief is not bound to the eyes and the ears, and the vision divine is so clear and unmarred, that each baker of pies in the dirt is a bard? Give a knife and a shingle, he fits out a fleet, and, on that little mud-puddle over the street, his invention, in purest good faith, will make sail round the globe with a puff of his breath for a gale, will visit in barely ten minutes, all climes, and find Northwestern passages hundreds of times. Or, suppose the young Poet fresh stored with delights from that Bible of childhood, the Arabian Nights, he will turn to a crony and cry, "Jack, let 's play that I am a Genius!" Jacky straightway makes Aladdin's lamp out of a stone, and, for hours, they enjoy each his own supernatural powers. This is all very pretty and pleasant, but then suppose our two urchins have grown into men, and both have turned authors, — one says to his brother, "Let 's play we 're the American somethings or other, — say Homer or Sophocles, Goethe or Scott (only let them be big enough, no matter what). Come, you shall be Byron or Pope, which you choose: I 'll be Coleridge, and both shall write mutual reviews." So they both (as mere strangers) before many days, send each other a cord of anonymous bays. Each, piling his epithets, smiles in his sleeve to see what his friend can be made to believe; each, reading the other's unbiased review, thinks — Here's pretty high praise, but no more than is true. Well, we laugh at them both, and yet make no great fuss when the same farce is acted to benefit us. Even I, who, if asked, scarce a month since, what Fudge meant, should have

answered, the dear Public's critical judgment, begin to think sharp-witted Horace spoke sooth when he said, that the Public *sometimes* hit the truth.

In reading these lines, you perhaps have a vision of a person in pretty good health and condition, and yet, since I put forth my primary edition, I have been crushed, scorched, withered, used up and put down (by Smith with the cordial assistance of Brown), in all, if you put any faith in my rhymes, to the number of ninety-five several times, and, while I am writing, — I tremble to think of it, for I may at this moment be just on the brink of it, — Molybdostom, angry at being omitted, has begun a critique, — am I not to be pitied?*

Now I shall not crush *them* since, indeed, for that matter, no pressure I know of could render them flatter; nor wither, nor scorch them, — no action of fire could make either them or their articles drier; nor waste time in putting them down — I am thinking not their own self-inflation will keep them from sinking; for there's this contradiction about the whole bevy, — though without the least weight, they are awfully heavy. No, my dear honest bore, *surdo fabulam narras*, they are no more to me than a rat in the arras. I can walk with the Doctor, get facts from the Don, or draw out the Lambish quintessence of John, and feel nothing more than a half-comic sorrow, to think that they all will be lying to-morrow tossed carelessly up on the waste-paper shelves, and forgotten by all but their half-dozen selves. Once snug in my attic, my fire in a roar, I leave the whole pack of them outside the door. With Hakluyt or Purchas I wander away to the black northern seas or barbaric Cathay; get *fon* with O'Shanter, and sober me then with that builder of brick-kilnish dramas, rare Ben; snuff Herbert, as holy as a flower on a grave; with Fletcher wax tender, o'er Chap-

man grow brave; with Marlowe or Kyd take a fine poet-rave; in Very, most Hebrew of Saxons, find peace; with Lycidas welter on vext Irish seas; with Webster grow wild, and climb earthward again, down by mystical Browne's Jacob's-ladder-like brain, to that spiritual Pepys (Cotton's version) Montaigne; find a new depth in Wordsworth, undreamed of before, — that divinely inspired, wise, deep, tender, grand - bore. Or, out of my study, the scholar thrown off, Nature holds up her shield 'gainst the sneer and the scoff; the laudscape, forever consoling and kind, pours her wine and her oil on the smarts of the mind. The waterfalls, scattering its vanishing gems; the tall grove of hemlocks, with moss on their stems, like splashes of sunlight; the pond in the woods, where no foot but mine and the bittern's intrudes; these are all my kind neighbors, and leave me no wish to say aught to you all, my poor critics, but — pish! I have buried the hatchet: I am twisting an allumette out of one of you now, and relighting my calumet. In your private capacities, come when you please, I will give you my hand and a fresh pipe apiece.

As I ran through the leaves of my poor little book, to take a fond author's first tremulous look, it was quite an excitement to hunt the *errata*, sprawled in as birds' tracks are in some kinds of strata (only these made things crookeder). Fancy an heir, that a father had seen born well-featured and fair, turning suddenly wry-nosed, club-footed, squint-eyed, hair-lipped, wapper-jawed, carrot haired, from a pride become an aversion, — my case was yet worse. A club-foot (by way of a change) in a verse, I might have forgiven, an *o's* being wry, a limp in an *e*, or a cock in an *i*, — but to have the sweet babe of my brain served in *pi*! I am not queasy-stomached, but such a Thyestean banquet as that was quite out of the question.

In the edition now issued, no pains are neglected, and my verses, as oratory say, stand corrected. Yet some blun-

* The wise Scandinavians probably called their bards by the queer-looking title of Scald, in a delicate way, as it were, just to hint to the world th: hot water they always get into.

ders remain of the public's own make, which I wish to correct for my personal sake. For instance, a character drawn in pure fun and condensing the traits of a dozen in one, has been, as I hear, by some persons applied to a good friend of mine, whom to stab in the side, as we walked along chatting and joking together, would not be *my* way. I can hardly tell whether a question will ever arise in which he and I should by any strange fortune agree, but meanwhile my esteem for him grows as I know him, and, though not the best judge on earth of a poem, he knows what it is he is saying and why, and is honest and fearless, two good points which I have not found so rife I can

easily smother my love for them, whether on my side or t'other.

For my other *anonymi*, you may be sure that I know what is meant by a caricature, and what by a portrait. There *are* those who think it is capital fun to be spattering their ink on quiet, unquarrelsome folk, but the minute the game changes sides and the others begin it, they see something savage and horrible in it. As for me I respect neither women nor men for their gender, nor own any sex in a pen. I choose just to hint to some causeless unfriends that, as far as I know, there are always two ends (and one of them heaviest, too) to a staff, and two parties also to every good laugh.

A FABLE FOR CRITICS.

PHŒBUS, sitting one day in a laurel-
tree's shade,
Was reminded of Daphne, of whom it
was made,
For the god being one day too warm in
his wooing,
She took to the tree to escape his pur-
suing ;
Be the cause what it might, from his
offers she shrunk,
And, Ginevra-like, shut herself up in a
trunk ;
And, though 't was a step into which he
had driven her,
He somehow or other had never for-
given her ;
Her memory he nursed as a kind of a
tonic,
Something bitter to chew when he 'd
play the Byronic,
And I can't count the obstinate nymphs
that he brought over,
By a strange kind of smile he put on
when he thought of her.
" My case is like Dido's," he some-
times remarked :
" When I last saw my love, she was
fairly embarked
In a laurel, as *she* thought — but (ah
how Fate mocks !)
She has found it by this time a very bad
box ;
Let hunters from me take this saw when
they need it, —
You're not always sure of your game
when you've treed it.
Just conceive such a change taking
place in one's mistress !
What romance would be left ? — who
can flatter or kiss trees ?
And, for mercy's sake, how could one
keep up a dialogue

With a dull wooden thing that will live
and will die a log, —
Not to say that the thought would for-
ever intrude
That you 've less chance to win her the
more she is wood ?
Ah ! it went to my heart, and the mem-
ory still grieves,
To see those loved graces all taking
their leaves ;
Those charms beyond speech, so en-
chanting but now,
As they left me forever, each making its
bough !
If her tongue *had* a tang sometimes
more than was right,
Her new bark is worse than ten times
her old bite."

Now, Daphne, — before she was hap-
pily treeified, —
Over all other blossoms the lily had
deified,
And when she expected the god on a
visit
('T was before he had made his inten-
tions explicit),
Some buds she arranged with a vast
deal of care,
To look as if artlessly twined in her hair,
Where they seemed, as he said, when
he paid his addresses,
Like the day breaking through the long
night of her tresses ;
So whenever he wished to be quite irre-
sistible,
Like a man with eight trumps in his
hand at a whist-table
(I feared me at first that the rhyme was
untwistable,
Though I might have lugged in an allu-
sion to Cristabel), —

He would take up a lily, and gloomily
look in it,
As I shall at the —, when they cut
up my book in it.

Well, here, after all the bad rhyme
I've been spinning,
I've got back at last to my story's be-
ginning :
Sitting there, as I say, in the shade of
his mistress,
As dull as a volume of old Chester mys-
teries,
Or as those puzzling specimens, which,
in old histories,
We read of his verses — the Oracles,
namely, —
(I wonder the Greeks should have
swallowed them tamely,
For one might bet safely whatever he
has to risk,
They were laid at his door by some an-
cient Miss Asterisk,
And so dull that the men who retailed
them out-doors
Got the ill name of augurs, because
they were bores, —)
First, he mused what the animal sub-
stance or herb is
Would induce a mustache, for you
know he's *imberbis* ;
Then he shuddered to think how his
youthful position
Was assailed by the age of his son the
physician ;
At some poems he glanced, had been
sent to him lately,
And the metre and sentiment puzzled
him greatly ;
“ Mehercle ! I'd make such proceed-
ing felonious, —
Have they all of them slept in the cave
of Trophonius ?
Look well to your seat, 't is like taking
an airing
On a corduroy road, and that out of re-
pairing ;
It leads one, 't is true, through the
primitive forest,
Grand natural features, — *Et*, then, one
has no rest ;
You just catch a glimpse of some rav-
ishing distance,
When a jolt puts the whole of it out of
existence, —

Why not use their ears, if they happen
to have any ? ”
— Here the laurel-leaves murmured
the name of poor Daphne.

“ O, weep with me, Daphne, ” he
sighed, “ for you know it's
A terrible thing to be pestered with
poets !
But, alas, she is dumb, and the proverb
holds good,
She never will cry till she's out of the
wood !
What would n't I give if I never had
known of her ?
'T were a kind of relief had I some-
thing to groan over :
If I had but some letters of hers, now,
to toss over,
I might turn for the nonce a Byronic
philosopher,
And bewitch all the flats by bemoaning
the loss of her.
One needs something tangible, though,
to begin on, —
A loom, as it were, for the fancy to spin
on ;
What boots all your grist ? it can never
be ground
Till a breeze makes the arms of the
windmill go round
(Or, if 't is a water-mill, alter the meta-
phor,
And say it won't stir, save the wheel be
well wet afore,
Or lug in some stuff about water “ so
dreamily, ” —
It is not a metaphor, though, 't is a
simile) :
A lily, perhaps, would set *my* mill
a-going,
For just at this season, I think, they
are blowing.
Here, somebody, fetch one, not very
far hence
They're in bloom by the score, 't is
but climbing a fence ;
There's a poet hard by, who does noth-
ing but fill his
Whole garden, from one end to t'other,
with lilies ;
A very good plan, were it not for sati-
ety,
One longs for a weed here and there,
for variety :

Though a weed is no more than a flower
in disguise,
Which is seen through at once, if love
give a man eyes."

Now there happened to be among
Phœbus's followers,
A gentleman, one of the omnivorous
swallowers,
Who bolt every book that comes out of
the press,
Without the least question of larger or
less,
Whose stomachs are strong at the ex-
pense of their head, —
For reading new books is like eating
new bread,
One can bear it at first, but by gradual
steps he
Is brought to death's door of a mental
dyspepsy.
On a previous stage of existence, our
Hero
Had ridden outside, with the glass be-
low zero ;
He had been, 't is a fact you may safely
rely on,
Of a very old stock a most eminent
scion, —
A stock all fresh quacks their fierce
boluses ply on,
Who stretch the new boots Earth's
unwilling to try on,
Whom humbugs of all shapes and sorts
keep their eye on,
Whose hair 's in the mortar of every
new Zion,
Who, when whistles are dear, go direct-
ly and buy one,
Who think slavery a crime that we
must not say fie on,
Who hunt, if they e'er hunt at all, with
the lion
(Though they hunt lions also, whenever
they spy one),
Who contrive to make every good for-
tune a wry one,
And at last cloose the hard bed of
honor to die on,
Whose pedigree, traced to earth's
earliest years,
Is longer than anything else but their
ears ; —
In short, he was sent into life with the
wrong key,

He unlocked the door, and stept forth
a poor donkey.
Though kicked and abused by his bi-
pedal betters
Yet he filled no mean place in the king-
dom of letters ;
Far happier than many a literary
hack,
He bore only paper-mill rags on his
back
(For it makes a vast difference which
side the mill
One expends on the paper his labor
and skill) ;
So, when his soul waited a new trans-
migration,
And Destiny balanced 'twixt this and
that station,
Not having much time to expend upon
bothers,
Remembering he 'd had some connec-
tion with authors,
And considering his four legs had grown
paralytic, —
She set him on two, and he came forth
a critic.

Through his babyhood no kind of
pleasure he took
In any amusement but tearing a book ;
For him there was no intermediate stage
From babyhood up to straight-laced
middle age ;
There were years when he did n't wear
coat-tails behind,
But a boy he could never be rightly de-
fined ;
Like the Irish Good Folk, though in
length scarce a span,
From the womb he came gravely, a
little old man ;
While other boys' trousers demanded
the toil
Of the motherly fingers on all kinds of
soil,
Red, yellow, brown, black, clayey,
gravelly, loamy,
He sat in the corner and read Viri
Romæ.
He never was known to unbend or to
revel once
In base, marbles, hockey, or kick up
the devil once ;
He was just one of those who excite
the benevolence

Of your old prigs who sound the soul's
 depths with a ledger,
 And are on the lookout for some young
 men to 'edger-
 -cate,' as they call it, who won't be too
 costly,
 And who 'll afterward take to the
 ministry mostly ;
 Who always wear spectacles, always
 look bilious,
 Always keep on good terms with each
mater-familias
 Throughout the whole parish, and man-
 age to rear
 Ten boys like themselves, on four hun-
 dred a year :
 Who, fulfilling in turn the same fearful
 conditions,
 Either preach through their noses, or
 go upon missions.

In this way our hero got safely to
 college,
 Where he bolted alike both his com-
 mons and knowledge ;
 A reading-machine, always wound up
 and going,
 He mastered whatever was not worth
 the knowing,
 Appeared in a gown, and a vest of
 black satin,
 To spout such a Gothic oration in
 Latin
 That Tully could never have made out
 a word in it
 (Though himself was the model the
 author preferred in it),
 And grasping the parchment which gave
 him in fee
 All the mystic and-so-forths contained
 in A. B.,
 He was launched (life is always com-
 pared to a sea),
 With just enough learning, and skill
 for the using it,
 To prove he 'd a brain, by forever con-
 fusing it.
 So worthy St. Benedict, piously burn-
 ing
 With the holiest zeal against secular
 learning,
Nesciensque scienter, as writers express
 it,
Indoctusque sapienter a Roma recessit.

'T would be endless to tell you the
 things that he knew,
 All separate facts, undeniably true,
 But with him or each other they 'd
 nothing to do ;
 No power of combining, arranging, dis-
 cerning,
 Digested the masses he learned into
 learning ;
 There was one thing in life he had
 practical knowledge for
 (And this, you will think, he need
 scarce go to college for), —
 Not a deed would he do, nor a word
 would he utter,
 Till he 'd weighed its relations to plain
 bread and butter.
 When he left Alma Mater, he practised
 his wits
 In compiling the journals' historical
 bits, —
 Of shops broken open, men falling in fits,
 Great fortunes in England bequeathed
 to poor printers,
 And cold spells, the coldest for many
 past winters, —
 Then, rising by industry, knack, and
 address,
 Got notices up for an unbiased press,
 With a mind so well poised, it seemed
 equally made for
 Applause or abuse, just which chanced
 to be paid for ;
 From this point his progress was rapid
 and sure,
 To the post of a regular heavy reviewer.

And here I must say he wrote ex-
 cellent articles
 On the Hebraic points, or the force
 of Greek particles,
 They filled up the space nothing else
 was prepared for ;
 And nobody read that which nobody
 cared for ;
 If any old book reached a fiftieth edition,
 He could fill forty pages with safe erudi-
 tion :
 He could gauge the old books by the
 old set of rules,
 And his very old nothings pleased very
 old fools ;
 But give him a new book, fresh out of
 the heart,

And you put him at sea without compass or chart, —
 His blunders aspired to the rank of an art ;
 For his lore was engraft, something foreign that grew in him,
 Exhausting the sap of the native and true in him,
 So that when a man came with a soul that was new in him,
 Carving new forms of truth out of Nature's old granite,
 New and old at their birth, like Le Verrier's planet,
 Which, to get a true judgment, themselves must create
 In the soul of their critic the measure and weight,
 Being rather themselves a fresh standard of grace,
 To compute their own judge, and assign him his place,
 Our reviewer would crawl all about it and round it,
 And, reporting each circumstance just as he found it,
 Without the least malice, — his record would be
 Profoundly æsthetic as that of a flea,
 Which, supping on Wordsworth, should print, for our sakes,
 Recollections of nights with the Bard of the Lakes,
 Or, lodged by an Arab guide, ventured to render a
 General view of the ruins at Denderah.

As I said, he was never precisely unkind,
 The defect in his brain was just absence of mind ;
 If he boasted, 't was simply that he was self-made,
 A position which I, for one, never gain-said,
 My respect for my Maker supposing a skill
 In his works which our Hero would answer but ill ;
 And I trust that the mould which he used may be cracked, or he,
 Made bold by success, may enlarge his phylactery,
 And set up a kind of a man-manufactory, —

An event which I shudder to think about, seeing
 That Man is a moral, accountable being.

He meant well enough, but was still in the way,
 As a dunce always is, let him be where he may ;
 Indeed, they appear to come into existence
 To impede other folks with their awkward assistance,
 If you set up a dunce on the very North pole,
 All alone with himself, I believe, on my soul,
 He'd manage to get betwixt somebody's shins,
 And pitch him down bodily, all in his sins,
 To the grave polar bears sitting round on the ice,
 All shortening their grace, to be in for a slice ;
 Or, if he found nobody else there to pother,
 Why, one of his legs would just trip up the other,
 For there 's nothing we read of in torture's inventions,
 Like a well-meaning dunce, with the best of intentions.

A terrible fellow to meet in society,
 Not the toast that he buttered was ever so dry at tea ;
 There he'd sit at the table and stir in his sugar,
 Crouching close for a spring, all the while, like a cougar ;
 Be sure of your facts, of your measures and weights,
 Of your time, — he 's as fond as an Arab of dates ; —
 You 'll be telling, perhaps, in your comical way,
 Of something you 've seen in the course of the day ;
 And, just as you 're tapering out the conclusion,
 You venture an ill-fated classic allusion, —
 The girls have all got their laughs ready,
 when, whack !

The cougar comes down on your thunderstruck back !
 You had left out a comma, — your Greek 's put in joint,
 And pointed at cost of your story's whole point.
 In the course of the evening, you venture on certain
 Soft speeches to Anne, in the shade of the curtain :
 You tell her your heart can be likened to *one* flower,
 " And that, O most charming of women, 's the sunflower,
 Which turns " — here a clear nasal voice, to your terror,
 From outside the curtain, says, " That 's all an error."
 As for him, he 's — no matter, he never grew tender,
 Sitting after a ball, with his feet on the fender,
 Shaping somebody's sweet features out of cigar smoke,
 (Though he 'd willingly grant you that such doings are smoke) ;
 All women he damns with *mutabile semper*,
 And if ever he felt something like love's distemper,
 'T was towards a young lady who spoke ancient Mexican,
 And assisted her father in making a lexicon ;
 Though I recollect hearing him get quite ferocious
 About Mary Clausum, the mistress of Grotius,
 Or something of that sort, — but, no more to bore ye
 With character-painting, I 'll turn to my story.

Now, Apollo, who finds it convenient sometimes
 To get his court clear of the makers of rhymes,
 The *genus*, I think it is called, *irritable*,
 Every one of whom thinks himself treated most shabbily,
 And nurses a — what is it? — *immediabile*,
 Which keeps him at boiling-point, hot for a quarrel,

As bitter as wormwood, and sourer than sorrel,
 If any poor devil but look at a laurel : —
 Apollo, I say, being sick of their rioting
 (Though he sometimes acknowledged their verse had a quieting
 Effect after dinner, and seemed to suggest a
 Retreat to the shrine of a tranquil siesta),
 Kept our Hero at hand, who, by means of a bray,
 Which he gave to the life, drove the rabble away ;
 And if that would n't do, he was sure to succeed,
 If he took his review out and offered to read ;
 Or, failing in plans of this milder description,
 He would ask for their aid to get up a subscription,
 Considering that authorship was n't a rich craft,
 To print the " American drama of Witchcraft."
 " Stay, I 'll read you a scene," — but he hardly began,
 Ere Apollo shrieked " Help ! " and the authors all ran :
 And once, when these purgatives acted with less spirit,
 And the desperate case asked a remedy desperate,
 He drew from his pocket a foolscap epistle,
 As calmly as if 't were a nine-barrelled pistol,
 And threatened them all with the judgment to come,
 Of " A wandering Star's first impressions of Rome."
 " Stop ! stop ! " with their hands o'er their ears, screamed the Muses,
 " He may go off and murder himself, if he chooses,
 'T was a means self-defence only sanctioned his trying,
 'T is mere massacre now that the enemy 's flying ;
 If he 's forced to 't again, and we happen to be there,
 Give us each a large handkerchief soaked in strong ether."

I called this a "Fable for Critics";
 you think it's
 More like a display of my rhythmical
 trinkets;
 My plot, like an icicle, 's slender and
 slippery,
 Every moment more slender, and likely
 to slip away,
 And the reader unwilling *in loco desi-*
perere,
 Is free to jump over as much of my frip-
 pery
 As he fancies, and, if he 's a provident
 skipper, he
 May have an Odyssean sway of the
 gales,
 And get safe to port, ere his patience
 quite fails;
 Moreover, although 't is a slender re-
 turn
 For your toil and expense, yet my pa-
 per will burn,
 And, if you have manfully struggled
 thus far with me,
 You may e'en twist me up, and just
 light your cigar with me:
 If too angry for that, you can tear me
 in pieces,
 And my *membra disjecta* consign to
 the breezes,
 A fate like great Ratzau's, whom one
 of those bores,
 Who befleaded with bad verses poor
 Louis Quatorze,
 Describes (the first verse somehow ends
 with *victoire*),
 As *dispersant partout et ses membres*
et sa gloire;
 Or, if I were over-desirous of earning
 A repute among noodles for classical
 learning,
 I could pick you a score of allusions, I
 wis,
 As new as the jests of *Didaskalos tis*;
 Better still, I could make out a good
 solid list
 From recondite authors who do not ex-
 ist, —
 But that would be naughty: at least, I
 could twist
 Something out of Absyrtus, or turn your
 inquiries
 After Milton's prose metaphor, drawn
 from Osiris; —

But, as Cicero says he won't say this or
 that
 (A fetch, I must say, most transparent
 and flat),
 After saying whate'er he could possibly
 think of, —
 I simply will state that I pause on the
 brink of
 A mire, ankle-deep, of deliberate con-
 fusion,
 Made up of old jumbles of classic allu-
 sion,
 So, when you were thinking yourselves
 to be pitied,
 Just conceive how much harder your
 teeth you 'd have gritted,
 An 't were not for the dulness I've
 kindly omitted.

I'd apologize here for my many di-
 gressions,
 Were it not that I 'm certain to trip into
 fresh ones
 ('T is so hard to escape if you get in
 their mesh once);
 Just reflect, if you please, how 't is said
 by Horatius,
 That Mæonides nods now and then,
 and, my gracious!
 It certainly does look a little bit omi-
 nous
 When he gets under way with *ton*
d'apameibomenos.
 (Here a something occurs which I'll
 just clap a rhyme to,
 And say it myself, ere a Zoilus have
 time to, —
 Any author a nap like Van Winkle's
 may take,
 If he only contrive to keep readers
 awake,
 But he 'll very soon find himself laid on
 the shelf,
 If *they* fall a-nodding when he nods
 himself.)

Once for all, to return, and to stay,
 will I, nill I —
 When Phœbus expressed his desire for
 a lily,
 Our hero, whose homœopathic sagacity
 With an ocean of zeal mixed his drop
 of capacity,
 Set off for the garden as fast as the wind

(Or, to take a comparison more to my mind,
As a sound politician leaves conscience behind),
And leaped the low fence, as a party hack jumps
O'er his principles, when something else turns up trumps.

He was gone a long time, and Apollo, meanwhile,
Went over some sonnets of his with a file,
For, of all compositions, he thought that the sonnet
Best repaid all the toil you expended upon it ;
It should reach with one impulse the end of its course,
And for one final blow collect all of its force ;
Not a verse should be salient, but each one should tend
With a wave-like up-gathering to burst at the end ;—
So, condensing the strength here, there smoothing a wry kink,
He was killing the time, when upwalked Mr. — ;
At a few steps behind him, a small man in glasses
Went dodging about, muttering, “Murderers ! asse !”
From out of his pocket a paper he'd take,
With the proud look of martyrdom tied to its stake,
And, reading a squib at himself, he'd say, “ Here I see
'Gainst American letters a bloody conspiracy,
They are all by my personal enemies written ;
I must post an anonymous letter to Britain,
And show that this gall is the merest suggestion
Of spite at my zeal on the Copyright question,
For, on this side the water, 't is prudent to pull
O'er the eyes of the public their national wool,
By accusing of slavish respect to John Bul

All American authors who have more or less
Of that anti-American humbug — success,
While in private we 're always embracing the knees
Of some twopenny editor over the seas,
And licking his critical shoes, for you know 't is
The whole aim of our lives to get one English notice ;
My American puffs I would willingly burn all
(They 're all from one source, monthly, weekly, diurnal)
To get but a kick from a transmarine journal !”

So, culling the gibes of each critical scorner
As if they were plums, and himself were Jack Horner,
He came cautiously on, peeping round every corner,
And into each hole where a weasel might pass in,
Expecting the knife of some critic assassin,
Who stabs to the heart with a caricature,
Not so bad as those daubs of the Sun, to be sure,
Yet done with a dagger-o'-type, whose vile portraits
Disperse all one's good and condense all one's poor traits.

Apollo looked up, hearing footsteps approaching,
And slipped out of sight the new rhymes he was broaching, —
“ Good day, Mr. —, I 'm happy to meet,
With a scholar so ripe, and a critic so neat,
Who through Grub Street the soul of a gentleman carries ;
What news from that suburb of London and Paris
Which latterly makes such shrill claims to monopolize
The credit of being the New World's metropolis ?”

“Why, nothing of consequence, save
 this attack
 On my friend there, behind, by some
 pitiful hack,
 Who thinks every national author a
 poor one,
 That is n't a copy of something that's
 foreign,
 And assaults the American Dick—”

“Nay, 't is clear

That your Damon there 's fond of a flea
 in his ear,
 And, if no one else furnished them
 gratis, on tick
 He would buy some himself, just to
 hear the old click ;
 Why, I honestly think, if some fool in
 Japan
 Should turn up his nose at the ‘Poems
 on Man,’
 Your friend there by some inward in-
 stinct would know it,
 Would get it translated, reprinted, and
 show it ;
 As a man might take off a high stock
 to exhibit
 The autograph round his own neck of
 the gibbet ;
 Nor would let it rest so, but fire column
 after column,
 Signed Cato, or Brutus, or something
 as solemn,
 By way of displaying his critical crosses,
 And tweaking that poor transatlantic
 proboscis,
 His broadsides resulting (this last
 there 's no doubt of)
 In successively sinking the craft they 're
 fired out of.
 Now nobody knows when an author is hit,
 If he don't have a public hysterical fit ;
 Let him only keep close in his snug
 garret's dim ether,
 And nobody 'd think of his critics— or
 him either ;
 If an author have any least fibre of
 worth in him,
 Abuse would but tickle the organ of
 mirth in him ;
 All the critics on earth cannot crush
 with their ban
 One word that 's in tune with the nature
 of man.”

“Well, perhaps so ; meanwhile I
 have brought you a book,
 Into which if you 'll just have the good-
 ness to look,
 You may feel so delighted (when once
 you are through it)
 As to deem it not unworth your while
 to review it,
 And I think I can promise your
 thoughts, if you do,
 A place in the next Democratic Re-
 view.”

“The most thankless of gods you
 must surely have thought me,
 For this is the forty-fourth copy you've
 brought me,
 I have given them away, or at least I
 have tried,
 But I've forty-two left, standing all side
 by side
 (The man who accepted that one copy
 died), —
 From one end of a shelf to the other
 they reach,
 ‘With the author's respects' neatly
 written in each.
 The publisher, sure, will proclaim a
 Te Deum,
 When he hears of that order the British
 Museum
 Has sent for one set of what books
 were first printed
 In America, little or big, — for 't is
 hinted
 That this is the first truly tangible hope
 he
 Has ever had raised for the sale of a copy.
 I've thought very often 't would be a
 good thing
 In all public collections of books, if a
 wing
 Were set off by itself, like the seas from
 the dry lands,
 Marked *Literature suited to desolate
 islands*,
 And filled with such books as could
 never be read
 Save by readers of proofs, forced to do
 it for bread, —
 Such books as one's wrecked on in
 small country-taverns,
 Such as hermits might mortify over in
 caverns,

Such as Satan, if printing had then
 been invented,
 As the climax of woe, would to Job
 have presented,
 Such as Crusoe might dip in, although
 there are few so
 Outrageously cornered by fate as poor
 Crusoe ;
 And since the philanthropists just now
 are banging
 And gibbeting all who're in favor of
 hanging
 (Though Cheever has proved that the
 Bible and Altar
 Were let down from Heaven at the end
 of a halter,
 And that vital religion would dull and
 grow callous,
 Unrefreshed, now and then, with a
 sniff of the gallows), —
 And folks are beginning to think it looks
 odd,
 To choke a poor scamp for the glory of
 God ;
 And that He who esteems the Virginia
 reel
 A bait to draw saints from their spiritual
 weal,
 And regards the quadrille as a far
 greater knavery
 Than crushing His African children
 with slavery, —
 Since all who take part in a waltz or
 cotillon
 Are mounted for hell on the Devil's
 own pillion,
 Who, as every true orthodox Christian
 well knows,
 Approaches the heart through the door
 of the toes, —
 That He, I was saying, whose judg-
 ments are stored
 For such as take steps in despite of his
 word,
 Should look with delight on the ago-
 nized prancing
 Of a wretch who has not the least
 ground for his dancing,
 While the State, standing by, sings a
 verse from the Psalter
 About offering to God on his favorite
 halter,
 And, when the legs droop from their
 twitching divergence,

Sells the clothes to a Jew, and the
 corpse to the surgeons ; —

Now, instead of all this, I think I
 can direct you all
 To a criminal code both humane and
 effectual ; —
 I propose to shut up every doer of
 wrong
 With these desperate books, for such a
 term, short or long,
 As by statute in such cases made and
 provided,
 Shall be by your wise legislators de-
 cided :
 Thus : — Let murderers be shut, to grow
 wiser and cooler,
 At hard labor for life on the works of
 Miss ——— ;
 Petty thieves, kept from flagranter
 crimes by their fears,
 Shall peruse Yankee Doodle a blank
 term of years, —
 That American Punch, like the Eng-
 lish, no doubt, —
 Just the sugar and lemons and spirit
 left out.

“ But stay, here comes Tityrus Gris-
 wold, and leads on
 The flocks whom he first plucks alive,
 and then feeds on, —
 A loud-cackling swarm, in whose feath-
 ers warm-drest,
 He goes for as perfect a — swan as the
 rest.

“ There comes Emerson first, whose
 rich words, every one,
 Are like gold nails in temples to hang
 trophies on,
 Whose prose is grand verse, while his
 verse, the Lord knows,
 Is some of it pr— No, 't is not even
 prose :
 I'm speaking of metres ; some poems
 have welled
 From those rare depths of soul that
 have ne'er been excelled ;
 They're not epics, but that does n't
 matter a pin,
 In creating, the only hard thing's to
 begin ;
 A grass-blade's no easier to make than
 an oak ;

If you 've once found the way, you 've
 achieved the grand stroke ;
 In the worst of his poems are mines of
 rich matter,
 But thrown in a heap with a crush and
 a clatter ;
 Now it is not one thing nor another alone
 Makes a poem, but rather the general
 tone,
 The something pervading, uniting the
 whole,
 The before unconceived, unconceivable
 soul,
 So that just in removing this trifle or
 that, you
 Take away, as it were, a chief limb of
 the statue ;
 Roots, wood, bark, and leaves singly
 perfect may be,
 But, clapt hodge-podge together, they
 don't make a tree.

“But, to come back to Emerson
 (whom, by the way,
 I believe we leit waiting), — his is, we
 may say,
 A Greek head on right Yankee shoul-
 ders, whose range
 Has Olympus for one pole, for t'other
 the Exchange ;
 He seems, to my thinking (although
 I'm afraid
 The comparison must, long ere this,
 have been made),
 A Plotinus - Montaigne, where the
 Egyptian's gold mist
 And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-
 by-jowl coexist ;
 All admire, and yet scarcely six con-
 verts he 's got
 To I don't (nor they either) exactly
 know what ;
 For though he builds glorious temples,
 't is odd
 He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
 'T is refreshing to old-fashioned people
 like me
 To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
 In whose mind all creation is duly re-
 spected
 As parts of himself — just a little pro-
 jected ;
 And who 's willing to worship the stars
 and the sun,

A convert to — nothing but Emerson.
 So perfect a balance there is in his
 head,
 That he talks of things sometimes as
 if they were dead ;
 Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of
 that sort,
 He looks at as merely ideas ; in short,
 As if they were fossils stuck round in a
 cabinet,
 Of such vast extent that our earth 's a
 mere dab in it ;
 Composed just as he is inclined to con-
 jecture her,
 Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-
 nine parts pure lecturer ;
 You are filled with delight at his clear
 demonstration,
 Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the
 occasion,
 With the quiet precision of science he 'll
 sort 'em,
 But you can't help suspecting the whole
 a *post mortem*.

“There are persons, mole-blind to
 the soul's make and style,
 Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and
 Carlyle ;
 To compare him with Plato would be
 vastly fairer,
 Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the
 rarer ;
 He sees fewer objects, but clearer,
 truelier,
 If C. 's as original, E. 's more peculiar ;
 That he 's more of a man you might
 say of the one,
 Of the other he 's more of an Emer-
 son ;
 C. 's the Titan, as shaggy of mind as
 of limb, —
 E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and
 slim ;
 The one 's two thirds Norseman, the
 other half Greek,
 Where the one 's most abounding, the
 other 's to seek ;
 C. 's generals require to be seen in the
 mass, —
 E. 's specialties gain if enlarged by the
 glass ;
 C. gives nature and God his own fits of
 the blues,

And rims common-sense things with
mystical hues, —

E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp
common sense ;

C. shows you how every-day matters
unite

With the dim transdiurnal recesses of
night, —

While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every
day ;

C. draws all his characters quite *à la*
Fuseli, —

He don't sketch their bundles of mus-
cles and thews illy,

But he paints with a brush so untamed
and profuse,

They seem nothing but bundles of
muscles and thews ;

E. is rather like Flaxman, lines strait
and severe,

And a colorless outline, but full, round,
and clear : —

To the men he thinks worthy he frankly
accords

The design of a white marble statue in
words.

C. labors to get at the centre, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his
actions and men ;

E. calmly assumes the said centre as
granted,

And, given himself, has whatever is
wanted.

“He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom
and wit, —

Who go carelessly o'er the sky-blue of
his brain,

And when he has skimmed it once,
skim it again ;

If at all they resemble him, you may be
sure it is

Because their shoals mirror his mists
and obscurities,

As a nud-puddle seems deep as heaven
for a minute,

While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected
within it.

“There comes —, for instance ; to
see him 's rare sport,

Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs
painfully short ;

How he jumps, how he strains, and
gets red in the face,

To keep step with the mystagogue's
natural pace !

He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,
His fingers exploring the prophet's
each pocket.

Fie, for shame, brother bard ; with
good fruit of your own,

Can't you let Neighbor Emerson's or-
chards alone ?

Besides, 't is no use, you 'll not find
e'en a core, —

— has picked up all the windfalls be-
fore.

They might strip every tree, and E.
never would catch 'em,

His Hesperides have no rude dragon
to watch 'em ;

When they send him a dishful, and
ask him to try 'em,

He never suspects how the sly rogues
came by 'em ;

He wonders why 't is there are none
such his trees on,

And thinks 'em the best he has tasted
this season.

“Yonder, calm as a cloud, Alcott
stalks in a dream,

And fancies himself in thy groves, Aca-
deme,

With the Parthenon nigh, and the
olive-trees o'er him,

And never a fact to perplex him or
bore him,

With a snug room at Plato's, when
night comes, to walk to,

And people from morning till midnight
to talk to,

And from midnight till morning, nor
snore in their listening ; —

So he muses, his face with the joy of
it glistening,

For his highest conceit of a happiest
state is

Where they'd live upon acorns, and
hear him talk gratis ;

And indeed, I believe, no man ever
talked better, —

Each sentence hangs perfectly poised
to a letter ;

He seems piling words, but there 's
 royal dust hid
 In the heart of each sky-piercing pyr-
 amid.
 While he talks he is great, but goes
 out like a taper,
 If you shut him up closely with pen,
 ink, and paper ;
 Yet his fingers itch for 'em from morn-
 ing till night,
 And he thinks he does wrong if he
 don't always write ;
 In this, as in all things, a lamb among
 men,
 He goes to sure death when he goes
 to his pen.

“Close behind him is Brownson, his
 mouth very full
 With attempting to gulp a Gregorian
 bull ;
 Who contrives, spite of that, to pour
 out as he goes
 A stream of transparent and forcible
 prose ;
 He shifts quite about, then proceeds to
 expound
 That 't is merely the earth, not himself,
 that turns round,
 And wishes it clearly impressed on your
 mind
 That the weathercock rules and not fol-
 lows the wind ;
 Proving first, then as deftly confuting
 each side,
 With no doctrine pleased that 's not
 somewhere denied,
 He lays the denier away on the shelf,
 And then — down beside him lies grave-
 ly himself.
 He 's the Salt River boatman, who al-
 ways stands willing
 To convey friend or foe without charg-
 ing a shilling,
 And so fond of the trip that, when
 leisure 's to spare,
 He 'll row himself up, if he can't get
 a fare.
 The worst of it is, that his logic 's so
 strong,
 That of two sides he commonly chooses
 the wrong ;
 If there *is* only one, why, he 'll split it
 in two,

And first pummel this half, then that,
 black and blue.
 That white 's white needs no proof, but
 it takes a deep fellow
 To prove it jet-black, and that jet-black
 is yellow.
 He offers the true faith to drink in a
 sieve, —
 When it reaches your lips there 's
 naught left to believe
 But a few silly-(sylo-, I mean,) -gisms
 that squat 'em
 Like tadpoles, o'erjoyed with the mud
 at the bottom.

“There is Willis, all *natty* and jaunty
 and gay,
 Who says his best things in so foppish
 a way,
 With conceits and pet phrases so thick-
 ly o'erlaying 'em,
 That one hardly knows whether to
 thank him for saying 'em ;
 Over-ornament ruins both poem and
 prose,
 Just conceive of a Muse with a ring in
 her nose !
 His prose had a natural grace of its own,
 And enough of it, too, if he 'd let it
 alone ;
 But he twitches and jerks so, one fairly
 gets tired,
 And is forced to forgive where he might
 have admired ;
 Yet whenever it slips away free and
 unladen,
 It runs like a stream with a musical
 waste,
 And gurgles along with the liquidest
 sweep ; —
 'T is not deep as a river, but who 'd
 have it deep ?
 In a country where scarcely a village is
 found
 That has not its author sublime and
 profound,
 For some one to be slightly shoal is a
 duty,
 And Willis's shallowness makes half
 his beauty.
 His prose winds along with a blithe,
 gurgling error,
 And reflects all of Heaven it can see in
 its mirror.

'T is a narrowish strip, but it is not an
artifice, —
'T is the true out-of-doors with its
genuine hearty phiz ;
It is Nature herself, and there 's some-
thing in that,
Since most brains reflect but the crown
of a hat.
No volume I know to read under a
tree,
More truly delicious than his A l' Abri,
With the shadows of leaves flowing
over your book,
Like ripple-shades netting the bed of a
brook ;
With June coming softly your shoulder
to look over,
Breezes waiting to turn every leaf of
your book over,
And Nature to criticise still as you
read, —
The page that bears that is a rare one
indeed.

" He 's so innate a cockney, that had
he been born
Where plain bare-skin 's the only full-
dress that is worn,
He 'd have given his own such an air
that you 'd say
'T had been made by a tailor to lounge
in Broadway.
His nature 's a glass of champagne
with the foam on't,
As tender as Fletcher, as witty as
Beaumont :
So his best things are done in the flush
of the moment,
If he wait, all is spoiled ; he may stir
it and shake it,
But, the fixed air once gone, he can
never remake it.
He might be a marvel of easy delight-
fulness,
If he would not sometimes leave the r
out of sprightfulness ;
And he ought to let Scripture alone —
't is self-slaughter,
For nobody likes inspiration-and-wa-
ter.
He 'd have been just the fellow to sup
at the Mermaid,
Cracking jokes at rare Ben, with an
eye to the barmaid,

His wit running up as Canary ran
down, —
The topmost bright bubble on the
wave of The 'Town.

" Here comes Parker, the Orson of
parsons, a man
Whom the Church undertook to put
under her ban
(The Church of Socinus, I mean), — his
opinions
Being So- (ultra) -cinian, they shocked
the Socinians ;
They believed — faith I 'm puzzled —
I think I may call
Their belief a believing in nothing at
all,
Or something of that sort ; I know they
all went
For a general union of total dissent :
He went a step farther ; without cough
or hem,
He frankly avowed he believed not in
them ;
And, before he could be jumbled up or
prevented,
From their orthodox kind of dissent he
dissented.
There was heresy here, you perceive,
for the right
Of privately judging means simply that
light
Has been granted to *me*, for deciding
on *you* ;
And in happier times, before Atheism
grew,
The deed contained clauses for cooking
you too.
Now at Xerxes and Knut we all laugh,
yet our foot
With the same wave is wet that mocked
Xerxes and Knut ;
And we all entertain a sincere private
notion,
That our *Thus far!* will have a great
weight with the ocean.
'T was so with our liberal Christians :
they bore
With sincerest conviction their chairs
to the shore ;
They banished their worn theological
birches,
Bade natural progress keep out of the
Churches,

And expected the lines they had drawn
to prevail
With the fast-rising tide to keep out of
their pale ;
They had formerly dammed the Pon-
tiffical See,
And the same thing, they thought,
would do nicely for P. ;
But he turned up his nose at their mur-
muring and shamming,
And cared (shall I say?) not a d— for
their damming ;
So they first read him out of their
church, and next minute
Turned round and declared he had
never been in it.
But the ban was too small or the man
was too big,
For he recks not their bells, books,
and candles a fig
(He don't look like a man who would
stay treated shabbily,
Sophrinous' son's head o'er the fea-
tures of Rabelais) ; —
He bangs and bethwacks them, — their
backs he salutes
With the whole tree of knowledge torn
up by the roots ;
His sermons with satire are plenteously
verjuiced,
And he talks in one breath of Confut-
zee, Cass, Zerduscht,
Jack Robinson, Peter the Hermit,
Strap, Dathan,
Cush, Pitt (not the bottomless, *that*
he's no faith in),
Pan, Pillicock, Shakespeare. Paul,
Toots, Monsieur Tonson,
Aldebaran, Alcander, Ben Khorat, Ben
Jonson,
Thoth, Richter, Joe Smith, Father
Paul, Judah Monis,
Musæus, Muretus, *hem*, — μ Scor-
pionis,
Maccabee, Maccaboy, Mac — Mac —
ah ! Machiavelli,
Condorcel, Count d'Orsay, Conder,
Sav, Ganganelli,
Orion, O'Connell, the Chevalier D'O,
(See the Memoirs of Sully,) *το παυ*, the
great toe
Of the statue of Jupiter, now made to pass
For that of Jew Peter by good Rom-
ish brass,

(You may add for yourselves, for I find
it a bore,
All the names you have ever, or not,
heard before,
And when you've done that — why,
invent a few more.)
His hearers can't tell you on Sunday
beforehand,
If in that day's discourse they'll be
Bibled or Koraned,
For he's seized the idea (by his mar-
tyrdom fired)
That all men (not orthodox) *may be*
inspired ;
Yet though wisdom profane with his
creed he may weave in,
He makes it quite clear what he *does n't*
believe in,
While some, who decry him, think all
Kingdom Come
Is a sort of a, kind of a, species of
Hum,
Of which, as it were, so to speak, not a
crumb
Would be left, if we did n't keep care-
fully mum,
And, to make a clean breast, that 't is
perfectly plain
That *all* kinds of wisdom are some-
what profane ;
Now P.'s creed than this may be lighter
or darker
But in one thing, 't is clear, he has faith,
namely — Parker ;
And this is what makes him the crowd-
drawing preacher,
There's a background of god to each
hard-working feature,
Every word that he speaks has been
fierily furnaced
In the blast of a life that has struggled
in earnest :
There he stands, looking more like a
ploughman than priest,
If not dreadfully awkward, not grace-
ful at least,
His gestures all downright and same,
if you will,
As of brown-fisted Hobnail in hoeing
a drill,
But his periods fall on you, stroke after
stroke,
Like the blows of a lumberer felling an
oak,

You forget the man wholly, you 're
thankful to meet
With a preacher who smacks of the
field and the street,
And to hear, you 're not over-particular
whence,
Almost Taylor's profusion, quite Lati-
mer's sense.

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool,
and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never
is ignified,
Save when by reflection 't is kindled o'
nights
With a semblance of flame by the chill
Northern Lights.
He may rank (Griswold says so) first
bard of your nation
(There 's no doubt that he stands in
supreme ice-olation),
Your topmost Parnassus he may set
his heel on,
But no warm applauses come, peal fol-
lowing peal on, —
He 's too smooth and too polished to
hang any zeal on :
Unqualified merits, I 'll grant, if you
choose, he has 'em,
But he lacks the one merit of kindling
enthusiasm ;
If he stir you at all, it is just, on my
soul,
Like being stirred up with the very
North Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer,
but *inter*
Nos, we don't want *extra* freezing in
winter ;
Take him up in the depth of July, my
advice is,
When you feel an Egyptian devotion to
ices.
But deduct all you can, there 's enough
that 's right good in him,
He has a true soul for field, river, and
wood in him ;
And his heart, in the midst of brick
walls, or where'er it is,
Glows, softens, and thrills with the
tenderest charities —
To you mortals that delve in this trade-
ridden planet?

No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their
limestone and granite.
If you 're one who *in loco* (add *foco*
here) *desipis*,
You will get of his outermost heart (as I
guess) a piece ;
But you 'd get deeper down if you came
as a precipice,
And would break the last seal of its in-
wardest fountain,
If you only could palm yourself off for
a mountain.
Mr. Quivis, or somebody quite as dis-
cerning,
Some scholar who 's hourly expecting
his learning,
Calls B. the American Wordsworth ;
but Wordsworth
Is worth near as much as your whole
tuneful herd 's worth.
No, don't be absurd, he 's an excellent
Bryant ;
But, my friends, you 'll endanger the
life of your client,
By attempting to stretch him up into a
giant :
If you choose to compare him, I think
there are two per-
-sons fit for a parallel — Thomson and
Cowper ; *
I don't mean exactly, — there 's some-
thing of each,
There 's T.'s love of nature, C.'s pen-
chant to preach ;
Just mix up their minds so that C.'s
spice of craziness
Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn
for laziness,
And it gives you a brain cool, quite
frictionless, quiet,
Whose internal police nips the buds of
all riot, —
A brain like a permanent strait-jacket
put on
The heart which strives vainly to burst
off a button, —
A brain which, without being slow or
mechanic,

* To demonstrate quickly and easily how per-
-versely absurd 't is to sound this name *Cow-*
per,
As people in general call him named *super*,
I remark that he rhymes it himself with horse-
trooper.

Does more than a larger less drilled,
 more volcanic ;
 He's a Cowper condensed, with no
 craziness bitten,
 And the advantage that Wordsworth
 before him has written.

“ But, my dear little bardlings, don't
 prick up your ears
 Nor suppose I would rank you and
 Bryant as peers ;
 If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean
 to say
 There is nothing in that which is grand
 in its way ;
 He is almost the one of your poets that
 knows
 How much grace, strength, and dignity
 lie in Repose ;
 If he sometimes fall short, he is too
 wise to mar
 His thought's modest fulness by going
 too far ;
 'T would be well if your authors should
 all make a trial
 Of what virtue there is in severe self-
 denial,
 And measure their writings by Hesiod's
 staff,
 Which teaches that all has less value
 than half.

“ There is Whittier, whose swelling
 and vehement heart
 Strains the strait-breasted drab of the
 Quaker apart,
 And reveals the live Man, still supreme
 and erect,
 Underneath the bemoaning wrappers
 of sect ;
 There was ne'er a man born who had
 more of the swing
 Of the true lyric bard and all that kind
 of thing ;
 And his failures arise (though perhaps
 he don't know it)
 From the very same cause that has
 made him a poet, —
 A fervor of mind which knows no sep-
 aration
 'Twixt simple excitement and pure in-
 spiration,
 As my Pythoness erst sometimes erred
 from not knowing

If 'twere I or mere wind through her
 tripod was blowing ;
 Let his mind once get head in its fa-
 vorite direction
 And the torrent of verse bursts the
 dams of reflection,
 While, borne with the rush of the metre
 along,
 The poet may chance to go right or go
 wrong,
 Content with the whirl and delirium of
 song ;
 Then his grammar's not always cor-
 rect, nor his rhymes,
 And he's prone to repeat his own
 lyrics sometimes,
 Not his best, though, for those are
 struck off at white-heats
 When the heart in his breast like a
 trip-hammer beats,
 And can ne'er be repeated again any
 more
 Than they could have been carefully
 plotted before :
 Like old what's-his-name there at the
 battle of Hastings
 (Who, however, gave more than mere
 rhythmical bastings),
 Our Quaker leads off metaphorical
 fights
 For reform and whatever they call hu-
 man rights,
 Both singing and striking in front of the
 war
 And hitting his foes with the mallet of
 Thor :
Anne hæc, one exclaims, on behold-
 ing his knocks,
Vestis filii tui, O leather-clad Fox ?
 Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid
 din,
 Preaching brotherly love and then driv-
 ing it in
 To the brain of the tough old Goliah of
 sin,
 With the smoothest of pebbles from
 Castaly's spring
 Impressed on his hard moral sense
 with a sling ?

“ All honor and praise to the right-
 hearted bard
 Who was true to The Voice when such
 service was hard,

Who himself was so free he dared sing
 for the slave
 When to look but a protest in silence
 was brave ;
 All honor and praise to the women and
 men
 Who spoke out for the dumb and the
 down-trodden then !
 I need not to name them, already for
 each
 I see History preparing the statue and
 niche ;
 They were harsh, but shall *you* be so
 shocked at hard words
 Who have beaten your pruning-hooks
 up into swords,
 Whose rewards and hurrahs men are
 surer to gain
 By the reaping of men and of women
 than grain ?
 Why should *you* stand aghast at their
 fierce wordy war, if
 You scalp one another for Bank or for
 Tariff ?
 Your calling them cut-throats and
 knaves all day long
 Don't prove that the use of hard
 language is wrong ;
 While the World's heart beats quicker
 to think of such men
 As signed Tyranny's doom with a
 bloody steel-pen,
 While on Fourth-of-July beardless
 orators fright one
 With hints at Harmodius and Aristo-
 geiton,
 You need not look shy at your sisters
 and brothers
 Who stab with sharp words for the free-
 dom of others ; —
 No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the
 loyal and true
 Who, for sake of the many, dared stand
 with the few,
 Not of blood-spattered laurel for ene-
 mies braved,
 But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for
 citizers saved !

“Here comes Dana, abstractedly
 loitering along,
 Involved in a paulo-post-future of song,
 Who 'll be going to write what 'll never
 be written

Till the Muse, ere he thinks of it, gives
 him the mitten, —
 Who is so well aware of how things
 should be done,
 That his own works displease him be-
 fore they're begun, —
 Who so well all that makes up good
 poetry knows,
 That the best of his poems is written
 in prose ;
 All saddled and bridled stood Pegasus
 waiting,
 He was booted and spurred, but he
 loitered debating ;
 In a very grave question his soul was
 immersed, —
 Which foot in the stirrup he ought to
 put first ;
 And, while this point and that he judi-
 cially dwelt on,
 He, somehow or other, had written
 Paul Felton,
 Whose beauties or faults, whichever
 you see there,
 You 'll allow only genius could hit
 upon either.
 That he once was the Idle Man none
 will deplore.
 But I fear he will never be anything
 more ;
 The ocean of song heaves and glitters
 before him,
 The depth and the vastness and long-
 ing sweep o'er him,
 He knows every breaker and shoal on
 the chart,
 He has the Coast Pilot and so on by heart,
 Yet he spends his whole life, like the
 man in the fable,
 In learning to swim on his library-
 table.

“There swaggers John Neal, who
 has wasted in Maine
 The sinews and chords of his pugilist
 brain,
 Who might have been poet, but that, in
 its stead, he
 Preferred to believe that he was so al-
 ready ;
 Too hasty to wait till Art's ripe fruit
 should drop,
 He must pelt down an unripe and
 colicky crop ;

Who took to the law, and had this sterling plea for it,
 It required him to quarrel, and paid him a fee for it ;
 A man who 's made less than he might have, because
 He always has thought himself more than he was, —
 Who, with very good natural gifts as a bard,
 Broke the strings of his lyre out by striking too hard,
 And cracked half the notes of a truly fine voice,
 Because song drew less instant attention than noise.
 Ah, men do not know how much strength is in poise,
 That he goes the farthest who goes far enough,
 And that all beyond that is just bother and stuff.
 No vain man matures, he makes too much new wood ;
 His blooms are too thick for the fruit to be good ;
 'T is the modest man ripens, 't is he that achieves,
 Just what 's needed of sunshine and shade he receives ;
 Grapes, to mellow, require the cool dark of their leaves ;
 Neal wants balance ; he throws his mind always too far,
 Whisking out flocks of comets, but never a star ;
 He has so much muscle, and loves so to show it,
 That he strips himself naked to prove he 's a poet,
 And, to show he could leap Art's wide ditch, if he tried,
 Jumps clean o'er it, and into the hedge t'other side.
 He has strength, but there 's nothing about him in keeping ;
 One gets surelier onward by walking than leaping ;
 He has used his own sinews himself to distress,
 And had done vastly more had he done vastly less ;
 In letters, too soon is as bad as too late ;
 Could he only have waited he might have been great :

But he plumped into Helicon up to the waist,
 And muddled the stream ere he took his first taste.

“There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
 That you hardly at first see the strength that is there ;
 A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
 So earnest, so graceful, so solid, so fleet,
 Is worth a descent from Olympus to meet ;
 'T is as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
 With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
 Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
 With a single anemone trembly and rathe ;
 His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
 That a suitable parallel sets one to seek, —
 He 's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck ;
 When nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
 For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
 So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
 From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
 And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
 For making him fully and perfectly man.
 The success of her scheme gave her so much delight,
 That she tried it again, shortly after, in Dwight ;
 Only, while she was kneading and shaping the clay,
 She sang to her work in her sweet childish way,
 And found, when she 'd put the last touch to his soul,
 That the music had somehow got mixed with the whole.

“Here 's Cooper, who 's written six volumes to show

He's as good as a lord: well, let's
 grant that he's so;
 If a person prefer that description of
 praise,
 Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper
 than bays;
 But need take no pains to convince us
 he's not
 (As his enemies say) the American
 Scott.
 Choose any twelve men, and let C.
 read aloud
 That one of his novels of which he's
 most proud,
 And I'd lay any bet that, without ever
 quitting
 Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for
 acquitting.
 He has drawn you one character, though,
 that is new,
 One wildflower he's plucked that is
 wet with the dew
 Of this fresh Western world, and, the
 thing not to mince,
 He has done naught but copy it ill ever
 since;
 His Indians, with proper respect be it
 said,
 Are just Natty Bumpo, daubed over
 with red,
 And his very Long Toms are the same
 useful Nat,
 Rigg'd up in duck pants and a sou'-
 wester hat
 (Though once in a Coffin, a good
 chance was found
 To have slipped the old fellow away
 underground).
 All his other men-figures are clothes
 upon sticks,
 The *dernière chemise* of a man in a
 fix
 (As a captain besieged, when his garri-
 son's small,
 Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er
 the wall);
 And the women he draws from one
 model don't vary,
 All sappy as maples and flat as a prai-
 rie.
 When a character's wanted, he goes to
 the task
 As a cooper would do in composing a
 cask;

He picks out the staves, of their quali-
 ties heedful,
 Just hoops them together as tight as is
 needful,
 And, if the best fortune should crown
 the attempt, he
 Has made at the most something wood-
 en and empty.

“Don't suppose I would underrate
 Cooper's abilities;
 If I thought you'd do that, I should
 feel very ill at ease;
 The men who have given to *one* char-
 acter life
 And objective existence are not very
 rife;
 You may number them all, both prose-
 writers and singers,
 Without overrunning the bounds of
 your fingers,
 And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
 Than Adams the parson or Primrose
 the vicar.

“There is one thing in Cooper I
 like, too, and that is
 That on manners he lectures his coun-
 trymen gratis;
 Not precisely so either, because, for a
 rarity,
 He is paid for his tickets in unpopu-
 larity.
 Now he may overcharge his American
 pictures,
 But you'll grant there's a good deal
 of truth in his strictures;
 And I honor the man who is willing to
 sink
 Half his present repute for the freedom
 to think,
 And, when he has thought, be his
 cause strong or weak,
 Will risk t'other half for the freedom
 to speak,
 Caring naught for what vengeance the
 mob has in store,
 Let that mob be the upper ten thou-
 sand or lower.

“There are truths you Americans
 need to be told,
 And it never'll refute them to swagger
 and scold;

John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in
 choler
 At your aptness for trade, says you
 worship the dollar ;
 But to scorn such eye-dollar-try 's what
 very few do,
 And John goes to that church as often
 as you do.
 No matter what John says, don't try
 to outcrow him,
 'T is enough to go quietly on and out-
 grow him ;
 Like most fathers, Bull hates to see
 Number One
 Displacing himself in the mind of his
 son,
 And detests the same faults in himself
 he 'd neglected
 When he sees them again in his child's
 glass reflected ;
 To love one another you 're too like by
 half ;
 If he is a bull, you 're a pretty stout
 calf,
 And tear your own pasture for naught
 but to show
 What a nice pair of horns you 're be-
 ginning to grow.

“There are one or two things I
 should just like to hint,
 For you don't often get the truth told
 you in print ;
 The most of you (this is what strikes
 all beholders)
 Have a mental and physical stoop in
 the shoulders ;
 Though you ought to be free as the
 winds and the waves,
 You 've the gait and the manners of
 runaway slaves ;
 Though you brag of your New World,
 you don't half believe in it,
 And as much of the Old as is possible
 weave in it ;
 Your goddess of freedom, a tight, bux-
 om girl,
 With lips like a cherry and teeth like
 a pearl,
 With eyes bold as Herè's, and hair
 floating free,
 And full of the sun as the spray of the sea,
 Who can sing at a husking or romp at
 a shearing,

Who can trip through the forests alone
 without fearing,
 Who can drive home the cows with a
 song through the grass,
 Keeps glancing aside into Europe's
 cracked glass,
 Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches
 up her lithe waist,
 And makes herself wretched with
 transmarine taste ;
 She loses her fresh country charm when
 she takes
 Any mirror except her own rivers and
 lakes.

“ You steal Englishmen's books and
 think Englishmen's thought,
 With their salt on her tail your wild
 eagle is caught ;
 Your literature suits its each whisper
 and motion
 To what will be thought of it over the
 ocean ;
 The cast clothes of Europe your states-
 manship tries
 And mumbles again the old blarneys
 and lies ; —
 Forget Europe wholly, your veins
 throb with blood,
 To which the dull current in hers is
 but mud ;
 Let her sneer, let her say your experi-
 ment fails,
 In her voice there 's a tremble e'en
 now while she rails,
 And your shore will soon be in the na-
 ture of things
 Covered thick with gilt driftwood of
 runaway kings,
 Where alone, as it were in a Longfel-
 low's Waif,
 Her fugitive pieces will find themselves
 safe.
 O my friends, thank your God, if you
 have one, that he
 'Twixt the Old World and you set the
 gulf of a sea ;
 Be strong-backed, brown-handed, up-
 right as your pines,
 By the scale of a hemisphere shape
 your designs,
 Be true to yourselves and this new nine-
 teenth age,

As a statue by Powers, or a picture by
 Page,
 Plough, sail, forge, build, carve, paint,
 all things make new,
 To your own New-World instincts con-
 trive to be true,
 Keep your ears open wide to the Fu-
 ture's first call,
 Be whatever you will, but yourselves
 first of all,
 Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's
 heaven-scaling peaks,
 And become my new race of more prac-
 tical Greeks. —
 Hem ! your likeness at present, I shud-
 der to tell o't,
 Is that you have your slaves, and the
 Greek had his helot."

Here a gentleman present, who had
 in his attic
 More pepper than brains, shrieked, —
 "The man's a fanatic,
 I'm a capital tailor with warm tar and
 feathers,
 And will make him a suit that'll serve
 in all weathers ;
 But we'll argue the point first, I'm
 willing to reason 't,
 Palaver before condemnation's but
 decent ;
 So, through my humble person, Hu-
 manity begs
 Of the friends of true freedom a loan
 of bad eggs."
 But Apollo let one such a look of his
 show forth
 As when ἦε νύκτι εὐκώζεις, and so forth,
 And the gentleman somehow slunk out
 of the way,
 But, as he was going, gained courage
 to say, —
 "At slavery in the abstract my whole
 soul rebels,
 I am as strongly opposed to't as any
 one else."
 "Ay, no doubt, but whenever I've
 happened to meet
 With a wrong or a crime, it is always
 concrete,"
 Answered Phœbus severely ; then turn-
 ing to us,
 "The mistake of such fellows as just
 made the fuss

Is only in taking a great busy nation
 For a part of their pitiful cotton-plan-
 tation. —
 But there comes Miranda, Zeus ! where
 shall I flee to ?
 She has such a penchant for bothering
 me too !
 She always keeps asking if I don't ob-
 serve a
 Particular likeness 'twixt her and
 Minerva ;
 She tells me my efforts in verse are
 quite clever ; —
 She's been travelling now, and will be
 worse than ever ;
 One would think, though, a sharp-
 sighted noter she'd be
 Of all that's worth mentioning over
 the sea,
 For a woman must surely see well, if
 she try,
 The whole of whose being's a capital I :
 She will take an old notion, and make
 it her own,
 By saying it o'er in her Sibylline tone,
 Or persuade you't is something tre-
 mendously deep,
 By repeating it so as to put you to
 sleep ;
 And she well may defy any mortal 'to
 see through it,
 When once she has mixed up her in-
 finite *me* through it.
 There is one thing she owns in her
 own single right,
 It is native and genuine — namely, her
 spite :
 Though, when acting as censor, she
 privately blows
 A censer of vanity 'neath her own nose."

Here Miranda came up, and said,
 "Phœbus ! you know
 That the infinite Soul has its infinite
 woe,
 As I ought to know, having lived cheek
 by jowl,
 Since the day I was born, with the In-
 finite Soul ;
 I myself introduced, I myself, I alone,
 To my Land's better life authors solely
 my own,
 Who the sad heart of earth on their
 shoulders have taken,

Whose works sound a depth by Life's
quiet unshaken,
Such as Shakespeare, for instance, the
Bible, and Bacon,
Not to mention my own works ; Time's
nadir is fleet,
And, as for myself, I'm quite out of
conceit — ”

“ Quite out of conceit ! I'm en-
chanted to hear it,”
Cried Apollo aside. “ Who'd have
thought she was near it ?
To be sure, one is apt to exhaust those
commodities
He uses too fast, yet in this case as
odd it is
As if Neptune should say to his turbot
and whittings,
' I'm as much out of salt as Miranda's
own writings '
(Which, as she in her own happy man-
ner has said,
Sound a depth, for't is one of the func-
tions of lead).
She often has asked me if I could not
find
A place somewhere near me that
suited her mind ;
I know but a single one vacant, which
she,
With her rare talent that way, would fit
to a T.
And it would not imply any pause or
cessation
In the work she esteems her peculiar
vocation, —
She may enter on duty to-day, if she
chooses,
And remain Tiring-woman for life to
the Muses.”

(Miranda meanwhile has succeeded
in driving
Up into a corner, in spite of their
striving,
A small flock of terrified victims, and
there,
With an I-turn-the-crank-of-the-Uni-
verse air
And a tone which, at least to *my* fancy,
appears
Not so much to be entering as boxing
your ears,

Is unfolding a tale (of herself, I sur-
mise),
For 't is dotted as thick as a peacock's
with I's.)
Apropos of Miranda, I'll rest on my
oars
And drift through a trifling digression
on bores,
For, though not wearing ear-rings *in*
more majorum,
Our ears are kept bored just as if we
still wore 'em.
There was one feudal custom worth
keeping, at least,
Roasted bores made a part of each well-
ordered feast,
And of all quiet pleasures the very *ne*
plus
Was in hunting wild bores as the tame
ones hunt us.
Archæologists, I know, who have per-
sonal fears
Of this wise application of hounds and
of spears,
Have tried to make out, with a zeal
more than wonted,
'T was a kind of wild swine that our
ancestors hunted ;
But I'll never believe that the age
which has strewn
Europe o'er with cathedrals, and other-
wise shown
That it knew what was what, could by
chance not have known
(Spending, too, its chief time with its
buff on, no doubt),
Which beast 't would improve the world
most to thin out.
I divide bores myself, in the manner
of rifles,
Into two great divisions, regardless of
trifles ; —
There's your smooth-bore and screw-
bore, who do much vary
In the weight of cold lead they respec-
tively carry.
The smooth-bore is one in whose es-
sence the mind
Not a corner nor cranny to cling by can
find ;
You feel as in nightmares sometimes,
when you slip
Down a steep slated roof, where there's
nothing to grip ;

You slide and you slide, the blank horror increases, —
 You had rather by^s far be at once smashed to pieces ;
 You fancy a whirlpool below white and frothing,
 And finally drop off and light upon — nothing.
 The screw-bore has twists in him, faint predilections
 For going just wrong in the tritest directions ;
 When he 's wrong he is flat, when he 's right he can't show it,
 He 'll tell you what Snooks said about the new poet,*
 Or how Fogrum was outraged by Tennyson's Princess ;
 He has spent all his spare time and intellect since his
 Birth in perusing, on each art and science,
 Just the books in which no one puts any reliance,
 And though *nemo*, we 're told, *horis omnibus sapit*,
 The rule will not fit him, however you shape it,
 For he has a perennial foison of sappiness ;
 He has just enough force to spoil half your day's happiness,
 And to make him a sort of mosquito to be with,
 But just not enough to dispute or agree with.

These sketches I made (not to be too explicit)
 From two honest fellows who made me a visit,
 And broke, like the tale of the Bear and the Fiddle,
 My reflections on Halleck short off by the middle ;
 I shall not now go into the subject more deeply,
 For I notice that some of my readers look sleep'y ;

* (If you call Snooks an owl, he will show by his looks
 That he 's morally certain you 're jealous of Snooks.)

I will barely remark that, 'mongst civilized nations,
 There 's none that displays more exemplary patience
 Under all sorts of boring, at all sorts of hours,
 From all sorts of desperate persons, than ours.
 Not to speak of our papers, our State legislatures,
 And other such trials for sensitive natures,
 Just look for a moment at Congress, — appalled,
 My fancy shrinks back from the phantom it called ;
 Why, there 's scarcely a member unworthy to frown
 'Neath what Fourier nicknames the Boreal crown ;
 Only think what that infinite borepow'r could do
 If applied with a utilitarian view ;
 Suppose, for example, we shipped it with care
 To Sahara's great desert and let it bore there ;
 If they held one short session and did nothing else,
 They 'd fill the whole waste with Artesian wells.
 But 'tis time now with pen phonographic to follow
 Through some more of his sketches our laughing Apollo : —

“ There comes Harry Franco, and, as he draws near,
 You find that 's a smile which you took for a sneer ;
 One half of him contradicts t'other ; his wont
 Is to say very sharp things and do very blunt ;
 His manner 's as hard as his feelings arc tender,
 And a *sortie* he 'll make when he means to surrender ;
 He 's in joke half the time when he seems to be sternest,
 When he seems to be joking, be sure he 's in earnest ;
 He has common sense in a way that 's uncommon,

Hates humbug and cant, loves his
 friends like a woman,
 Builds his dislikes of cards and his
 friendships of oak,
 Loves a prejudice better than aught
 but a joke,
 Is half upright Quaker, half down-
 right Come-outer,
 Loves Freedom too well to go stark
 mad about her,
 Quite artless himself is a lover of Art,
 Shuts you out of his secrets and into
 his heart,
 And though not a poet, yet all must
 admire
 In his letters of Pinto his skill on the
 liar.

“ There comes Poe, with his raven,
 like Barnaby Rudge,
 Three fifths of him genius and two
 fifths sheer fudge,
 Who talks like a book of lambs and
 pentameters,
 In a way to make people of common
 sense damn metres,
 Who has written some things quite the
 best of their kind,
 But the heart somehow seems all
 squeezed out by the mind,
 Who — but hey-day! What’s this?
 Messieurs Mathews and Poe,
 You must n’t fling mud-balls at Long-
 fellow so,
 Does it make a man worse that his
 character’s such
 As to make his friends love him (as
 you think) too much?
 Why, there is not a bard at this mo-
 ment alive
 More willing than he that his fellows
 should thrive;
 While you are abusing him thus, even
 now
 He would help either one of you out of
 a slough;
 You may say that he’s smooth and all
 that till you’re hoarse,
 But remember that elegance also is
 force;
 After polishing granite as much as you
 will,
 The heart keeps its tough old persist-
 ency still;

Deduct all you can that still keeps you
 at bay, —
 Why, he’ll live till men weary of Col-
 lins and Gray.
 I’m not over-fond of Greek metres in
 English,
 To me rhyme’s a gain, so it be not too
 jinglish,
 And your modern hexameter verses are
 no more
 Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope
 is like Homer;
 As the roar of the sea to the coo of a
 pigeon is,
 So, compared to your moderns, sounds
 old Melesigenes;
 I may be too partial, the reason, per-
 haps, o’t is
 That I’ve heard the old blind man re-
 cite his own rhapsodies,
 And my ear with that music impreg-
 nate may be,
 Like the poor exiled shell with the soul
 of the sea,
 Or as one can’t bear Strauss when his
 nature is cloven
 To its deeps within deeps by the stroke
 of Beethoven;
 But, set that aside, and ’t is truth that I
 speak,
 Had Theocritus written in English, not
 Greek,
 I believe that his exquisite sense would
 scarce change a line
 In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastor-
 al Evangeline.
 That’s not ancient nor modern, its
 place is apart
 Where time has no sway, in the realm
 of pure Art,
 ’T is a shrine of retreat from Earth’s
 hubbub and strife
 As quiet and chaste as the author’s own
 life.

“ There comes Philothea, her face
 all aglow,
 She has just been dividing some poor
 creature’s woe,
 And can’t tell which pleases her most,
 to relieve
 His want, or his story to hear and believe;
 No doubt against many deep griefs she
 prevails,

For her ear is the refuge of destitute
tales ;
She knows well that silence is sorrow's
best food,
And that talking draws off from the
heart its black blood,
So she 'll listen with patience and let
you unfold
Your bundle of rags as 't were pure cloth
of gold,
Which, indeed, it all turns to as soon
as she 's touched it,
And (to borrow a phrase from the
nursery) *munched* it ;
She has such a musical taste, she will go
Any distance to hear one who draws a
long bow ;
She will swallow a wonder by mere
might and main,
And thinks it geometry's fault if she 's
fain
To consider things flat, inasmuch as
they're plain ;
Facts with her are accomplished, as
Frenchmen would say, —
They will prove all she wishes them
to — either way,
And, as fact lies on this side or that,
we must try,
If we're seeking the truth, to find
where it don't lie ;
I was telling her once of a marvellous aloe
That for thousands of years had looked
spindling and sallow,
And, though nursed by the fruitfulest
powers of mud,
Had never vouchsafed e'en so much as
a bud,
Till its owner remarked (as a sailor,
you know,
Often will in a calm) that it never
would blow,
For he wished to exhibit the plant, and
designed
That its blowing should help him in
raising the wind ;
At last it was told him that if he should
water
Its roots with the blood of his unmarried
daughter
(Who was born, as her mother, a Cal-
vinist, said,
With William Law's serious caul on
her head),

It would blow as the obstinate breeze
did when by a
Like decree of her father died Iphige-
nia ;
At first he declared he himself would
be blowed
Ere his conscience with such a foul
crime he would load,
But the thought, coming oft, grew less
dark than before,
And he mused, as each creditor knocked
at his door,
If *this* were but done they would dun
me no more ;
I told Philothea his struggles and
doubts,
And how he considered the ins and
the outs
Of the visions he had, and the dreadful
dyspepsy,
How he went to the seër that lives at
Po'keepsie,
How the seër advised him to sleep on
it first
And to read his big volume in case of
the worst,
And further advised he should pay him
five dollars
For writing *Hum, Hum*, on his wrist-
bands and collars ;
Three years and ten days these dark
words he had studied
When the daughter was missed, and
the aloe had budded ;
I told how he watched it grow large
and more large,
And wondered how much for the show
he should charge, —
She had listened with utter indifference
to this, till
I told how it bloomed, and discharging
its pistil,
With an aim the Eumenides dictated,
shot
The botanical filicide dead on the
spot ;
It had blown, but he reaped not his
horrible gains,
For it blew with such force as to blow
out his brains,
And the crime was blown also, be-
cause on the wad,
Which was paper, was writ ' Visitation
of God,'

As well as a thrilling account of the deed
Which the coroner kindly allowed me
to read.

“Well, my friend took this story up
just, to be sure,
As one might a poor foundling that’s
laid at one’s door;
She combed it and washed it and
clothed it and fed it,
And as if ’t were her own child most
tenderly bred it,
Laid the scene (of the legend, I mean)
far away a-
-mong the green vales underneath
Himalaya.
And by artist-like touches, laid on
here and there,
Made the whole thing so touching, I
frankly declare
I have read it all thrice, and, perhaps
I am weak,
But I found every time there were tears
on my cheek.

“The pole, science tells us, the
magnet controls,
But she is a magnet to emigrant Poles,
And folks with a mission that nobody
knows,
Throng thickly about her as bees round
a rose;
She can fill up the *carets* in such, make
their scope
Converge to some focus of rational
hope,
And, with sympathies fresh as the
morning, their gall
Can transmute into honey, — but this
is not all;
Not only for those she has solace, O,
say,
Vice’s desperate nursling adrift in
Broadway,
Who clingest, with all that is left of
thee human,
To the last slender spar from the wreck
of the woman,
Hast thou not found one shore where
those tired drooping feet
Could reach firm mother-earth, one full
heart on whose beat
The soothed head in silence reposing
could hear

The chimes of far childhood throb back
on the ear?
Ah, there’s many a beam from the
fountain of day
That, to reach us unclouded, must pass,
on its way,
Through the soul of a woman, and hers
is wide ope
To the influence of Heaven as the blue
eyes of Hope;
Yes, a great heart is hers, one that
dares to go in
To the prison, the slave-hut, the alleys
of sin,
And to bring into each, or to find there,
some line
Of the never completely out-trampled
divine;
If her heart at high floods swamps her
brain now and then,
’T is but richer for that when the tide
ebbs agen,
As, after old Nile has subsided, his
plain
Overflows with a second broad deluge
of grain;
What a wealth would it bring to the
narrow and sour
Could they be as a Child but for one
little hour!

“What! Irving? thrice welcome,
warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from
Spain,
And the gravest sweet humor, that
ever were there
Since Cervantes met death in his gen-
tle despair;
Nay, don’t be embarrassed, nor look
so beseeching, —
I sha’ n’t run directly against my own
preaching,
And, having just laughed at their
Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless
Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly
feel, —
To a true poet-heart add the fun of
Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the
chill,
With the whole of that partnership’s
stock and good-will,

Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er,
 as a spell,
 The fine *old* English Gentleman, sim-
 mer it well,
 Sweeten just to your own private lik-
 ing, then strain,
 That only the finest and clearest re-
 main,
 Let it stand out of doors till a soul it
 receives
 From the warm lazy sun loitering down
 through green leaves,
 And you'll find a choice nature, not
 wholly deserving
 A name either English or Yankee, —
 just Irving.

“There goes, — but *set nominis
 umbra*, — his name
 You'll be glad enough, some day or
 other, to claim,
 And will all crowd about him and swear
 that you knew him
 If some English hack-critic should
 chance to review him
 The old *porcos ante ne projiciatis*
 MARGARITAS, for him you have veri-
 fied gratis ;
 What matters his name? Why, it may
 be Sylvester,
 Judd, Junior, or Junius, Ulysses, or
 Nestor,
 For aught I know or care ; 't is enough
 that I look
 On the author of 'Margaret,' the first
 Yankee book
 With the *soul* of Down East in't, and
 things farther East,
 As far as the threshold of morning, at
 least,
 Where awaits the fair dawn of the
 simple and true,
 Of the day that comes slowly to make
 all things new.
 'T has a smack of pine woods, of bare
 field and bleak hill,
 Such as only the breed of the May-
 flower could till ;
 The Puritan's shown in it, tough to the
 core,
 Such as prayed, smiting Agag on red
 Marston Moor ;
 With an unwilling humor, half choked
 by the drouth

In brown hollows about the inhospita-
 ble mouth ;
 With a soul full of poetry, though it
 has qualms
 About finding a happiness out of the
 Psalms ;
 Full of tenderness, too, though it
 shrinks in the dark,
 Hamadryad-like, under the coarse,
 shaggy bark ;
 That sees visions, knows wrestlings on
 God with the Will,
 And has its own Sinais and thunders
 still."

Here, — "Forgive me, Apollo," I
 cried, "while I pour
 My heart out to my birthplace : O
 loved more and more
 Dear Baystate, from whose rocky bosom
 thy sons
 Should suck milk, strong-will-giving,
 brave, such as runs
 In the veins of old Graylock — who is
 it that dares
 Call thee pedler, a soul wrapped in
 bank-books and shares?
 It is false! She's a Poet! I see, as I write,
 Along the far railroad the steam-snake
 glide white,
 The cataract-throb of her mill-hearts I
 hear,
 The swift strokes of trip-hammers wea-
 ry my ear,
 Sledges ring upon anvils, through logs
 the saw screams,
 Blocks swing to their place, beetles
 drive home the beams : —
 It is songs such as these that she croons
 to the din
 Of her fast-flying shuttles, year out
 and year in,
 While from earth's farthest corner there
 comes not a breeze
 But wafts her the buzz of her gold-
 gleaming bees :
 What though those horn hands have as
 yet found small time
 For painting and sculpture and music
 and rhyme?
 These will come in due order ; the need
 that pressed sorest
 Was to vanquish the seasons, the ocean,
 the forest,

To bridle and harness the rivers, the
 steam,
 Making that whirl her mill-wheels, this
 tug in her team,
 To vassalize old tyrant Winter, and
 make
 Him delve surlily for her on river and
 lake ; —
 When this New World was parted, she
 strove not to shirk
 Her lot in the heirdom, the tough, si-
 lent Work,
 The hero-share ever, from Herakles
 down
 To Odin, the Earth's iron sceptre and
 crown :
 Yes, thou dear, noble Mother ! if ever
 men's praise
 Could be claimed for creating heroical
 lays,
 Thou hast won it ; if ever the laurel
 divine
 Crowned the Maker and Builder, that
 glory is thine !
 Thy songs are right epic, they tell how
 this rude
 Rock-rib of our earth here was tamed
 and subdued ;
 Thou hast written them plain on the
 face of the planet
 In brave, deathless letters of iron and
 granite ;
 Thou hast printed them deep for all
 time ; they are set
 From the same runic type-fount and
 alphabet
 With thy stout Berkshire hills and the
 arms of thy Bay, —
 They are staves from the burly old
 Mayflower lay.
 If the drones of the Old World, in
 querulous ease,
 Ask thy Art and thy Letters, point
 proudly to these,
 Or, if they deny these are Letters and
 Art,
 Toil on with the same old invincible
 heart ;
 Thou art rearing the pedestal broad-
 based and grand
 Whereon the fair shapes of the Artist
 shall stand,
 And creating, through labors undaunted
 and long,

The theme for all Sculpture and Paint-
 ing and Song !

“ But my good mother Baystate wants
 no praise of mine,
 She learned from *her* mother a precept
 divine
 About something that butters no pars-
 nips, her *forte*
 In another direction lies, work is her
 sport
 (Though she 'll courtesy and set her cap
 straight, that she will,
 If you talk about Plymouth and red
 Bunker's hill).
 Dear, notable goodwife ! by this time
 of night,
 Her hearth is swept clean, and her fire
 burning bright,
 And she sits in a chair (of home plan
 and make) rocking,
 Musing much, all the while, as she
 darns on a stocking,
 Whether turkeys will come pretty high
 next Thanksgiving,
 Whether flour 'll be so dear, for, as
 sure as she's living,
 She will use rye-and-injun then, whether
 the pig
 By this time ain't got pretty tolerable
 big,
 And whether to sell it outright will be
 best,
 Or to smoke hams and shoulders and
 salt down the rest, —
 At this minute, she'd swop all my
 verses, ah, cruel !
 For the last patent stove that is saving
 of fuel ;
 So I 'll just let Apollo go on, for his
 phiz
 Shows I've kept him awaiting too long
 as it is.”

“ If our friend, there, who seems a
 reporter, is done
 With his burst of emotion, why, *I* will
 go on,”
 Said Apollo : some smiled, and, indeed,
 I must own
 There was something sarcastic, per-
 haps, in his tone ; —

“ There's Holmes, who is matchless
 among you for wit ;

A Leyden-jar always full-charged, from
 which flit
 The electrical tingles of hit after hit ;
 In long poems 't is painful sometimes,
 and invites
 A thought of the way the new Telegraph
 writes,
 Which pricks down its little sharp
 sentences spitefully
 As if you got more than you 'd title to
 rightfully,
 And you find yourself hoping its wild
 father Lightning
 Would flame in for a second and give
 you a fright'ning.
 He has perfect sway of what I call a
 sham metre,
 But many admire it, the English pen-
 tamer,
 And Campbell, I think, wrote most
 commonly worse,
 With less nerve, swing, and fire in the
 same kind of verse,
 Nor e'er achieved aught in 't so worthy
 of praise
 As the tribute of Holmes to the grand
Marseillaise.
 You went crazy last year over Bulwer's
 New Timon ; —
 Why, if B., to the day of his dying,
 should rhyme on,
 Heaping verses on verses and tomes
 upon tomes,
 He could ne'er reach the best point
 and vigor of Holmes.
 His are just the fine hands, too, to
 weave you a lyric
 Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced
 with satyric
 In a measure so kindly, you doubt if
 the toes
 That are trodden upon are your own or
 your foes'.

“There is Lowell, who's striving
 Parnassus to climb
 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together
 with rhyme,
 He might get on alone, spite of bram-
 bles and boulders,
 But he can't with that bundle he has
 on his shoulders,
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come
 nigh reaching

Till he learns the distinction 'twixt
 singing and preaching ;
 His lyre has some chords that would
 ring pretty well,
 But he 'd rather by half make a drum
 of the shell,
 And rattle away till he's old as Me-
 thusalem,
 At the head of a march to the last new
 Jerusalem.

“There goes Halleck, whose Fan-
 ny's a pseudo Don Juan,
 With the wickedness out that gave salt
 to the true one,
 He's a wit, though, I hear, of the very
 first order,
 And once made a pun on the words
 soft Recorder ;
 More than this, he's a very great poet,
 I'm told,
 And has had his works published in
 crimson and gold,
 With something they call 'Illustra-
 tions,' to wit,
 Like those with which Chapman ob-
 scured Holy Writ,*
 Which are said to illustrate, because,
 as I view it,
 Like *lucus a non*, they precisely don't
 do it ;
 Let a man who can write what himself
 understands
 Keep clear, if he can, of designing
 men's hands,
 Who bury the sense, if there's any
 worth having,
 And then very honestly call it engrav-
 ing.
 But, to quit *badinage*, which there
 is n't much wit in,
 Halleck's better, I doubt not, than all
 he has written ;
 In his verse a clear glimpse you will
 frequently find,
 If not of a great, of a fortunate mind,
 Which contrives to be true to its natural
 loves
 In a world of back-offices, ledgers, and
 stoves.
 When his heart breaks away from the
 brokers and banks,

* (Cuts rightly called wooden, as all must ad-
 mit.)

And kneels in its own private shrine to
 give thanks,
 There 's a genial manliness in him that
 earns
 Our sincerest respect (read, for in-
 stance, his "Burns"),
 And we can't but regret (seek excuse
 where we may)
 That so much of a man has been ped-
 dled away.

"But what 's that? a mass-meeting?
 No, there come in lots
 The American Disraelis, Bulwers, and
 Scotts,
 And in short the American everything-
 elses,
 Each charging the others with envies
 and jealousies;—
 By the way, 't is a fact that displays
 what profusions
 Of all kinds of greatness bless free in-
 stitutions,
 That while the Old World has pro-
 duced barely eight
 Of such poets as all men agree to call
 great,
 And of other great characters hardly a
 score
 (One might safely say less than that
 rather than more),
 With you every year a whole crop is
 begotten,
 They 're as much of a staple as corn is,
 or cotton;
 Why, there 's scarcely a huddle of log-
 huts and shanties
 That has not brought forth its own
 Miltons and Dantes;
 I myself know ten Byrons, one Cole-
 ridge, three Shelleys,
 Two Raphaels, six Titians, (I think)
 one Apelles,
 Leonardos and Rubenses plenty as
 lichens,
 One (but that one is plenty) American
 Dickens,
 A whole flock of Lambs, any number
 of Tennysons,—
 In short, if a man has the luck to have
 any sons,
 He may feel pretty certain that one out
 of twain

Will be some very great person over
 again.
 There is one inconvenience in all this
 which lies
 In the fact that by contrast we estimate
 size,*
 And, where there are none except Ti-
 tans, great stature
 Is only a simple proceeding of nature.
 What puff the strained sails of your
 praise shall you furl at, if
 The calmest degree that you know is
 superlative?
 At Rome, all whom Charon took into
 his wherry must,
 As a matter of course, be well *issimused*
 and *errimused*,
 A Greek, too, could feel, while in that
 famous boat he tost,
 That his friends would take care he
 was *wtosed* and *watosed*,
 And formerly we, as through grave-
 yards we past,
 Thought the world went from bad to
 worst fearfully fast;
 Let us glance for a moment, 't is well
 worth the pains,
 And note what an average graveyard
 contains;
 There lie levellers levelled, duns done
 up themselves,
 There are booksellers finally laid on
 their shelves,
 Horizontally there lie upright politi-
 cians,
 Dose-a-dose with their patients sleep
 faultless physicians,
 There are slave-drivers quietly whipped
 underground,
 There bookbinders, done up in boards,
 are fast bound,
 There card-players wait till the last
 trump be played,
 There all the choice spirits get finally
 laid,
 There the babe that 's unborn is sup-
 plied with a berth,

* That is in most cases we do, but not all
 Past a doubt, there are men who are in-
 nately small,
 Such as Blank, who, without being 'min-
 ished a tittle,
 Might stand for a type of the Absolute
 Little.

There men without legs get their six
 feet of earth,
 There lawyers repose, each wrapped up
 in his case,
 There seekers of office are sure of a
 place,
 There defendant and plaintiff get equal-
 ly cast,
 There shoemakers quietly stick to the
 last,
 There brokers at length become silent
 as stocks,
 There stage-drivers sleep without quit-
 ting their box,
 And so forth and so forth and so forth
 and so on,
 With this kind of stuff one might end-
 lessly go on ;
 To come to the point, I may safely as-
 sert you
 Will find in each yard every cardinal
 virtue : *
 Each has six truest patriots : four dis-
 coverers of ether,
 Who never had thought on't nor men-
 tioned it either :
 Ten poets, the greatest who ever wrote
 rhyme :
 Two hundred and forty first men of
 their time :
 One person whose portrait just gave
 the least hint
 Its original had a most horrible squint :
 One critic, most (what do they call it ?)
 reflective,
 Who never had used the phrase ob-
 jective :
 Forty fathers of Freedom, of whom
 twenty bred
 Their sons for the rice-swamps, at so
 much a head,
 And their daughters for — faugh ! thir-
 ty mothers of Gracchi :
 Non-resistants who gave many a spirit-
 ual black-eye :
 Eight true friends of their kind, one of
 whom was a jailer :
 Four captains almost as astounding as
 Taylor :

* (And at this just conclusion will surely
 arrive,
 That the goodness of earth is more dead
 than alive.)

Two dozen of Italy's exiles who shoot
 us his
 Kaisership daily, stern pen-and-ink
 Brutuses,
 Who, in Yankee back-parlors, with
 crucified smile,*
 Mount serenely their country's funereal
 pile :
 Ninety-nine Irish heroes, ferocious re-
 bellers
 'Gainst the Saxon in cis-marine garrets
 and cellars,
 Who shake their dread fists o'er the
 sea and all that, —
 As long as a copper drops into the hat :
 Nine hundred Teutonic republicans
 stark
 From Vaterland's battles just won —
 in the Park,
 Who the happy profession of martyr-
 dom take
 Whenever it gives them a chance at a
 steak :
 Sixty-two second Washingtons : two or
 three Jacksons :
 And so many everythings-else that it
 racks one's
 Poor memory too much to continue the
 list,
 Especially now they no longer exist ; —
 I would merely observe that you've
 taken to giving
 The puffs that belong to the dead to the
 living,
 And that somehow your trump-of-con-
 temporary-doom's tones
 Is tuned after old dedications and
 tombstones." —

Here the critic came in and a thistle
 presented † —
 From a frown to a smile the god's fea-
 tures relented,
 As he stared at his envoy, who, swell-
 ing with pride,
 To the god's asking look, nothing
 daunted, replied, —

* Not forgetting their tea and their toast,
 though, the while.

† Turn back now to page — goodness only
 knows what,
 And take a fresh hold on the thread of
 my plot.

"You're surprised, I suppose, I was
absent so long,
But your godship respecting the lilies
was wrong ;
I hurted the garden from one end to
't'other,
And got no reward but vexation and
botlier,
Till, tossed out with weeds in a corner
to wither,
This one lily I found and made haste
to bring hither."

"Did he think I had given him a
book to review ?
I ought to have known what the fellow
would do,"
Muttered Phœbus aside, "for a thistle
will pass
Beyond doubt for the queen of all
flowers with an ass ;
He has chosen in just the same way as
he 'd choose
His specimens out of the books he re-
views ;
And now, as this offers an excellent
text,
I 'll give 'em some brief hints on criti-
cism next."
So, musing a moment, he turned to the
crowd,
And, clearing his voice, spoke as fol-
lows aloud : —

"My friends, in the happier days
of the muse,
We were luckily free from such things
as reviews ;
Then naught came between with its
fog to make clearer
The heart of the poet to that of his
hearer ;
Then the poet brought heaven to the
people, and they
Felt that they, too, were poets in hear-
ing his lay ;
Then the poet was prophet, the past in
his soul
Precreated the future, both parts of
one whole ;
Then for him there was nothing too
great or too small,
For one natural deity sanctified all ;

Then the bard owned no clipper and
meter of moods
Save the spirit of silence that hovers
and broods
O'er the seas and the mountains, the
rivers and woods ;
He asked not earth's verdict, forget-
ting the clods,
His soul soared and sang to an audi-
ence of gods ;
'T was for them that he measured the
thought and the line,
And shaped for their vision the perfect
design,
With as glorious a foresight, a balance
as true,
As swung out the worlds in the infinite
blue ;
Then a glory and greatness invested
man's heart,
The universal, which now stands es-
tranged and apart,
In the free individual moulded, was
Art ;
Then the forms of the Artist seemed
thrilled with desire
For something as yet unattained, ful-
ler, higher,
As once with her lips, lifted hands, and
eyes listening,
And her whole upward soul in her
countenance glistening,
Eurydice stood — like a beacon un-
fired.
Which, once touched with flame, will
leap heav'nward inspired —
And waited with answering kindle to
mark
The first gleam of Orpheus that pained
the red Dark.
Then painting, song, sculpture did
more than relieve
The need that men feel to create and
believe,
And as, in all beauty, who listens with
love
Hears these words oft repeated — 'be-
yond and above,'
So these seemed to be but the visible
sign
Of the grasp of the soul after things
more divine ;
They were ladders the Artist erected to
climb

O'er the narrow horizon of space and
of time,
And we see there the footsteps by
which men had gained
To the one rapturous glimpse of the
never-attained,
As shepherds could erst sometimes
trace in the sod
The last spurning print of a sky-cleaving
ing god.

“But now, on the poet's dis-privacied
moods
With *do this* and *do that* the pert critic
intrudes ;
While he thinks he's been barely fulfilling
his duty
To interpret 'twixt men and their own
sense of beauty,
And has striven, while others sought
honor or pelf,
To make his kind happy as he was himself,
He finds he's been guilty of horrid
offences
In all kinds of moods, numbers, genders,
and tenses ;
He's been *ob* and *subjective*, what
Kettle calls Pot,
Precisely, at all events, what he ought
not,
You have done this, says one judge ;
done that, says another ;
You should have done this, grumbles
one ; *that*, says t'other ;
Never mind what he touches, one
shrieks out *Taboo!*
And while he is wondering what he
shall do,
Since each suggests opposite topics for
song,
They all shout together *you're right!*
and *you're wrong!*
“Nature fits all her children with
something to do,

He who would write and can't write,
can surely review,
Can set up a small booth as critic and
sell us his
Petty conceit and his pettier jealousies ;
Thus a lawyer's apprentice, just out of
his teens,
Will do for the Jeffrey of six magazines ;
Having read Johnson's lives of the poets
half through,
There's nothing on earth he's not
competent to ;
He reviews with as much nonchalance
as he whistles, —
He goes through a book and just picks
out the thistles,
It matters not whether he blame or
commend,
If he's bad as a foe, he's far worse as
a friend ;
Let an author but write what's above
his poor scope,
He goes to work gravely and twists up
a rope,
And, inviting the world to see punishment
done,
Hangs himself up to bleach in the wind
and the sun ;
'T is delightful to see, when a man
comes along
Who has anything in him peculiar and
strong,
Every cockboat that swims clear its
fierce (pop) gundeck at him,
And make as he passes its ludicrous
Peck at him —”

Here Miranda came up and began,
“As to that —”
Apollo at once seized his gloves, cane,
and hat,
And, seeing the place getting rapidly
cleared,
I, too, snatched my notes and forthwith
disappeared.

THE BIGLOW PAPERS.

NOTICES OF AN INDEPENDENT PRESS.

[I HAVE observed, reader (bene- or male-volent, as it may happen), that it is customary to append to the second editions of books, and to the second works of authors, short sentences commendatory of the first, under the title of *Notices of the Press*. These, I have been given to understand, are procurable at certain established rates, payment being made either in money or advertising patronage by the publisher, or by an adequate outlay of servility on the part of the author. Considering these things with myself, and also that such notices are neither intended, nor generally believed, to convey any real opinions, being a purely ceremonial accompaniment of literature, and resembling certificates to the virtues of various morbiferal panaceas, I conceived that it would be not only more economical to prepare a sufficient number of such myself, but also more immediately subservient to the end in view to prefix them to this our primary edition rather than await the contingency of a second, when they would seem to be of small utility. To delay attaching the *bohs* until the second attempt at flying the kite would indicate but a slender experience in that useful art. Neither has it escaped my notice, nor failed to afford me matter of reflection, that, when a circus or a caravan is about to visit Jaalam, the initial step is to send forward large and highly ornamented bills of performance to be hung in the bar-room and the post-office. These having been sufficiently gazed at, and beginning to lose their attractiveness except for the flies, and, truly, the boys also (in whom I find it impossible to repress, even during school-hours, certain oral and telegraphic communications

concerning the expected show), upon some fine morning the band enters in a gayly painted wagon, or triumphal chariot, and with noisy advertisement, by means of brass, wood, and sheepskin, makes the circuit of our startled village streets. Then, as the exciting sounds draw nearer and nearer, do I desiderate those eyes of Aristarchus, "whose looks were as a breaching to a boy." Then do I perceive, with vain regret of wasted opportunities, the advantage of a pancratic or pantechnic education, since he is most revered by my little subjects who can throw the cleanest summerset or walk most securely upon the revolving cask. The story of the Pied Piper becomes for the first time credible to me (albeit confirmed by the Hameliners dating their legal instruments from the period of his exit), as I behold how those strains, without pretence of magical potency, bewitch the pupillary legs, nor leave to the pedagogic an entire self-control. For these reasons, lest my kingly prerogative should suffer diminution, I prorogue my restless commons, whom I also follow into the street, chiefly lest some mischief may chance befall them. After the manner of such a band, I send forward the following notices of domestic manufacture, to make brazen proclamation, not unconscious of the advantage which will accrue, if our little craft, *cymbula subtilis*, shall seem to leave port with a clipping breeze, and to carry, in nautical phrase, a bone in her mouth. Nevertheless, I have chosen, as being more equitable, to prepare some also sufficiently objurgatory, that readers of every taste may find a dish to their palate. I have modelled them upon actually existing

specimens, preserved in my own cabinet of natural curiosities. One, in particular, I had copied with tolerable exactness from a notice of one of my own discourses, which, from its superior tone and appearance of vast experience, I concluded to have been written by a man at least three hundred years of age, though I recollected no existing instance of such antediluvian longevity. Nevertheless, I afterwards discovered the author to be a young gentleman preparing for the ministry under the direction of one of my brethren in a neighboring town, and whom I had once instinctively corrected in a Latin quantity. But this I have been forced to omit, from its too great length. — H. W.]

From the *Universal Literary Universe*.

Full of passages which rivet the attention of the reader. . . . Under a rustic garb, sentiments are conveyed which should be committed to the memory and engraven on the heart of every moral and social being. . . . We consider this a *unique* performance. . . . We hope to see it soon introduced into our common schools. . . . Mr. Wilbur has performed his duties as editor with excellent taste and judgment. . . . This is a vein which we hope to see successfully prosecuted. . . . We hail the appearance of this work as a long stride toward the formation of a purely aboriginal, indigenous, native, and American literature. We rejoice to meet with an author national enough to break away from the slavish deference, too common among us, to English grammar and orthography. . . . Where all is so good, we are at a loss how to make extracts. . . . On the whole, we may call it a volume which no library, pretending to entire completeness, should fail to place upon its shelves.

From the *Higginbottomopolis Snapping-turtle*.

A collection of the merest balderdash and doggerel that it was ever our bad fortune to lay eyes on. The author is a vulgar buffoon, and the editor a talkative, tedious old fool. We use strong language, but should any of our readers peruse the book, (from which calamity Heaven preserve them!) they will find reasons for it thick as the leaves of Valunbrozer, or, to use a still more expressive

comparison, as the combined heads of author and editor. The work is wretchedly got up. . . . We should like to know how much *British gold* was pocketed by this libeller of our country and her purest patriots.

From the *Oldfogrumville Mentor*.

We have not had time to do more than glance through this handsomely printed volume, but the name of its respectable editor, the Rev. Mr. Wilbur, of Jaalam, will afford a sufficient guaranty for the worth of its contents. . . . The paper is white, the type clear, and the volume of a convenient and attractive size. . . . In reading this elegantly executed work, it has seemed to us that a passage or two might have been retrenched with advantage, and that the general style of diction was susceptible of a higher polish. . . . On the whole, we may safely leave the ungrateful task of criticism to the reader. We will barely suggest, that in volumes intended, as this is, for the illustration of a provincial dialect and turns of expression, a dash of humor or satire might be thrown in with advantage. . . . The work is admirably got up. . . . This work will form an appropriate ornament to the centre-table. It is beautifully printed, on paper of an excellent quality.

From the *Dekay Bulwark*.

We should be wanting in our duty as the conductor of that tremendous engine, a pulic press, as an American, and as a man, did we allow such an opportunity as is presented to us by "The Biglow Papers" to pass by without entering our earnest protest against such attempts (now, alas! too common) at demoralizing the public sentiment. Under a wretched mask of stupid drollery, slavery, war, the social glass, and, in short, all the valuable and time-honored institutions justly dear to our common humanity and especially to republicans, are made the butt of coarse and senseless ribaldry by this low-minded scribbler. It is time that the respectable and religious portion of our community should be aroused to the alarming inroads of foreign Jacobinism, sansculottism, and infidelity. It is a fearful proof of the wide-spread nature of this contagion, that these secret stabs at religion and virtue are given from under the cloak (*credite, posteri!*) of a clergyman. It is a mournful spectacle indeed to the patriot and Christian to see liberality and new ideas (falsely so called, — they are as old as Eden) invading the sacred precincts of the pulpit. . . . On the whole, we consider this volume as one of the first shocking results which we predicted would spring out of the late French "Revolution" (!).

From the Bungtown Copper and Comprehensive Tocsin (a try-weakly family journal).

Altogether an admirable work. . . . Full of humor, boisterous, but delicate,—of wit withering and scorching, yet combined with a pathos cool as morning dew,—of satire ponderous as the mace of Richard, yet keen as the scymitar of Saladin. . . . A work full of "inountain-mirth," mischievous as Puck, and lightsome as Ariel. . . . We know not whether to admire most the genial, fresh, and discursive concinnity of the author, or his playful fancy, weird imagination, and compass of style, at once both objective and subjective. . . . We might indulge in some criticisms, but, were the author other than he is, he would be a different being. As it is, he has a wonderful *pose*, which flits from flower to flower, and bears the reader irresistibly along on its eagle pinions (like Gany-mede) to the "highest heaven of invention." . . . We love a book so purely objective. . . . Many of his pictures of natural scenery have an extraordinary subjective clearness and fidelity. . . . In fine, we consider this as one of the most extraordinary volumes of this or any age. We know of no English author who could have written it. It is a work to which the proud genius of our country, standing with one foot on the Aroostook and the other on the Rio Grande, and holding up the star-spangled banner amid the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds, may point with bewildering scorn of the punier efforts of enslaved Europe. . . . We hope soon to encounter our author among those higher walks of literature in which he is evidently capable of achieving enduring fame. Already we should be inclined to assign him a high position in the bright galaxy of our American bards.

From the Saltriver Pilot and Flag of Freedom.

A volume in bad grammar and worse taste. . . . While the pieces here collected were confined to their appropriate sphere in the corners of obscure newspapers, we considered them wholly beneath contempt, but, as the author has chosen to come forward in this public manner, he must expect the lash he so richly merits. . . . Contemptible slanders. . . . Vilest Billingsgate. . . . Has raked all the gutters of our language. . . . The most pure, upright, and consistent politicians not safe from his malignant venom. . . . General Cushing comes in for a share of his vile calumnies. . . . The Reverend Homer Wilbur is a disgrace to his cloth. . . .

From the World-Harmonic-Aolian-Attachment.

Speech is silver: silence is golden. No utterance more Orphic than this. While,

therefore, as highest author, we reverence him whose works continue heroically unwritten, we have also our hopeful word for those who with pen (from wing of goose loud-cackling, or seraph God-commissioned) record the thing that is revealed. . . . Under mask of quaintest irony, we detect here the deep, storm-tost (nigh shipwrecked) soul, thunder-scarred, semiarticulate, but ever climbing hopefully toward the peaceful summits of an Infinite Sorrow. . . . Yes, thou poor, forlorn Hosea, with Hebrew fire-flaming soul in thee, for thee also this life of ours has not been without its aspects of heavenliest pity and laughingest mirth. Conceivable enough! Through coarse Therseits-cloak, we have revelation of the heart, wild-glowing, world-clasping, that is in him. Bravely he grapples with the life-problem as it presents itself to him, uncombed, shaggy, careless o the "nicer proprieties," inexpert of "elegant diction," yet with voice audible enough to whoso hath ears, up there on the gravelly side-hills, or down on the splashy, indiarubber-like salt-marshes of native Jaalam. To this soul also the *Necessity of Creating* somewhat has unveiled its awful front. If not *Œdipuses* and *Electras* and *Alcestises*, then in God's name *Birdofredum Sawins*! These also shall get born into the world, and filch (if so need) a Zingali subsistence therein, these lank, omnivorous Yankees of his. He shall paint the Seen, since the Unseen will not sit to him. Yet in him also are *Nibelungen-lays*, and *Iliads*, and *Ulysses-wanderings*, and *Divine Comedies*,—if only once he could come at them! Therein lies much, nay all; for what truly is this which we name *All*, but that which we do *not* possess? . . . Glimpses also are given us of an old father *Ezekiel*, not without paternal pride, as is the wont of such. A brown, parchment-hided old man of the geoponic or bucolic species, gray-eyed, we fancy, *queued* perhaps, with much weather-cunning and plentiful September-gale memories, bidding fair in good time to become the *Oldest Inhabitant*. After such hasty apparition, he vanishes and is seen no more. . . . Of "Rev. Homer Wilbur, A. M., Pastor of the First Church in Jaalam," we have small care to speak here. Spare touch in him of his *Melesigenes* namesake, save, haply, the—blindness! A tolerably caliginose, nephe-legeretous elderly gentleman, with infinite faculty of sermonizing, muscularized by long practice, and excellent digestive apparatus, and, for the rest, well-meaning enough, and with small private illuminations (somewhat tallowy, it is to be feared) of his own. To him, there, "Pastor of the First Church in Jaalam," our Hosea presents himself as a quite inexplicable Sphinx-riddle. A rich poverty of Latin and Greek,—so far is clear enough, even to eyes peering myopic through horn-lensed editorial spectacles,—but naught farther? O purblind, well-meaning, altogether fuscous

Melesigenes-Wilbur, there are things in him incommunicable by stroke of birch! Did it ever enter that old bewildered head of thine that there was the *Possibility of the Infinite* in him? To thee, quite wingless (and even featherless) biped, has not so much even as a dream of wings ever come? "Talented young parishioner"? Among the Arts whereof thou art *Magister*, does that of *seeing* happen to be one? Unhappy *Artium Magister*! Somehow a Nemean lion, fulvous, torrid-eyed, dry-nursed in broad-howling sand-wildernesses of a sufficiently rare spirit-Libya (it may be supposed) has got whelped among the sheep. Already he stands wild-glaring, with feet clutching the ground as with oak-roots, gathering for a Remus-spring over the walls of thy little fold. In Heaven's name, go not near him with that flybite crook of thine! In good time, thou painful preacher, thou wilt go to the appointed place of departed Artillery-Election Sermons, Right-Hands of Fellowship, and Results of Councils, gathered to thy spiritual fathers with much Latin of the Epitaphial sort; thou, too, shalt have thy reward; but on him the Eumenides have looked, not Xantippes of the pit, snake-tressed, finger-threatening, but radiantly calm as on antique gems; for him paws impatient the winged courser of the gods, champing unwelcome bit; him the starry deeps, the empyrean glooms, and far-flashing splendors await.

—————

From the Onion Grove Phoenix.

A talented young townsman of ours, recently returned from a Continental tour, and who is already favorably known to our readers by his sprightly letters from abroad which have graced our columns, called at our office yesterday. We learn from him, that, having enjoyed the distinguished privilege, while in Germany, of an introduction to the celebrated Von Humbug, he took the opportunity to present that eminent man with a copy of the "Biglow Papers." The next morning he received the following note, which he has kindly furnished us for publication. We prefer to print it *verbatim*, knowing that our readers will readily forgive the few errors into which the illustrious writer has fallen, through ignorance of our language.

"HIGH-WORTHY MISTER!

"I shall also now especially happy starve, because I have more or less a work of one those aboriginal Red-Men seen in which have I so deaf an interest ever taken full-worthy on the self shelf with our Gottsched to be upset.

"Pardon my in the English-speech un-practice!

"VON HUMBUG."

He also sent with the above note a copy of his famous work on "Cosmetics," to be pre-

sented to Mr. Biglow; but this was taken from our friend by the English custom-house officers, probably through a petty national spite. No doubt, it has by this time found its way into the British Museum. We trust this outrage will be exposed in all our American papers. We shall do our best to bring it to the notice of the State Department. Our numerous readers will share in the pleasure we experience at seeing our young and vigorous national literature thus encouragingly patted on the head by this venerable and world-renowned German. We love to see these reciprocations of good-feeling between the different branches of the great Anglo-Saxon race.

[The following genuine "notice" having met my eye, I gladly insert a portion of it here, the more especially as it contains one of Mr. Biglow's poems not elsewhere printed. — H. W.]

—————

From the Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss.

... But, while we lament to see our young townsman thus mingling in the heated contests of party politics, we think we detect in him the presence of talents which, if properly directed, might give an innocent pleasure to many. As a proof that he is competent to the production of other kinds of poetry, we copy for our readers a short fragment of a pastoral by him, the manuscript of which was loaned us by a friend. The title of it is "The Courtin'."

ZEKLE crep' up, quite unbeknown,
An' peeked in thru the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

Agin' the chimby crooknecks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back frum Concord busted.

The wannut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her!
An' leetle fires danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

The very room, coz she wuz in,
Looked warn frum floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez th' apples she wuz peelin'.

She heerd a foot an' knowed it, tu,
Araspin' on the scraper, —
All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the seekle;
His heart kep' goin' pitypat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yet she gin her cheer a jerk
 Ez though she wished him furder
 An' on her apples kep' to work
 Ez ef a wager spurred her.

"You want to see my Pa, I spouse?"
 "Wal, no; I come designin' —"
 "To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin' clo'es
 Agin to-morrow's i'nin'."

He stood a spell on one foot fust
 Then stood a spell on tother,
 An' on which one he felt the wust
 He could n't ha' told ye, nuther.

SATIS multis sese emptores futuros libri professis, Georgius Nichols, Cantabrigiensis, opus emittet de parte gravi sed adhuc neglecta historiæ naturalis, cum titulo sequenti, videlicet :

Conatus ad Delineationem naturalem nonnihil perfectiorem Scarabæi Bombilatoris, vulgo dicti HUMBUG, ab HOMERO WILBUR, Artium Magistro, Societatis historico-naturalis Jaalamentis Præside (Secretario, Socioque (eheu!) singulo), multarumque aliarum Societatum eruditaram (sive ineruditaram) tam domesticarum quam transmarrinarum Socio — forsitan futuro.

PROEMIUM.

LECTORI BENEVOLO S.

Toga scholastica nondum deposita, quum systemata varia entomologica, a viris ejus scientiæ cultoribus studiosissimis summa diligentia ædificata, penitus indagâsem, non fuit quin luctuose omnibus in iis, quamvis aliter laude dignissimis, hiatum magni momenti perciperem. Tunc, nescio quo motu superiore impulsus, ad eum implendum (Curtius alter) me solemniter devovi. Nec ab isto labore, *δαμονίως* imposito, abstinui antequam tractatum sufficienter inconcinnum lingua vernacula perfeceram. Inde, juveniliter tumefactus, et barathro ineptiæ τῶν βιβλιοπωλῶν (necnon "Publici Legentis") nusquam explorato, me composuisse quod quasi placens præfervidas (ut sic dicam) homines ingurgitarent credidi. Sed, quum

Sez he, "I 'd better call agin";
 Sez she, "Think likely, *Mister*";
 The last word pricked him like a pin,
 An' — wal, he up and kist her.

When Ma bineby upon 'em slips,
 Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
 All kind o' smily round the lips
 An' teary round the lashes.

Her blood riz quick, though, like the tide
 Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
 An' all I know is they wuz cried
 In meetin', come nex Sunday.

huic et alio bibliopolæ MSS. mea submissem et nihil solidius responsione valde negativa in Musæum meum retulissem, horror ingens atque misericordia, ob crassitudinem Lambertianam in cerebris homunculorum istius muneris cœlesti quadam ira infixam, me invasere. Extemplo mei solius impensis librum edere decrevi, nihil omnino dubitans quin "Mundus Scientificus" (ut aiunt) crumenam meam ampliter repletet. Nullam, attamen, ex agro illo in eo parvulo segetem demessui, præter gaudium vacuum bene de Republica merendi. Iste panis meus pretiosus super aquas literarias fœculentas præfidenter jactus, quasi Harpyiarum quarundam (scilicet bibliopolarum istorum facinorosorum supradictorum) tactu rancidus, intra perpauca dies mihi domum rediit. Et, quum ipse tali victu ali non tolerarem, primum in mentem venit pistori (typographo nempe) nihilominus solvendum esse. Animum non idcirco demisi, imo æque ac pueri naviculas suas penes se lino retinent (eo ut et recto cursu delapsas ad ripam retrahant), sic ego Argô meam chartaceam fluctibus laborantem a quæsitu velleris aurei, ipse potius tonsus pelleque exutus, mente solida revocavi. Metaphoram ut mutem, *boomarangam* meam a scopo aberantem retraxi, dum majore vi, occasione ministrante, adversus Fortunam intorquerem. Ast mihi, talia volventi, et, sicut Saturnus ille παιδοβόρος, liberos intellectus mei depascere fidenti, casus miserandus, nec antea inauditus, supervenit. Nam, ut ferunt Scythas pietatis causa et parsimoniæ, parentes

suos mortuos devorâsse, sic filius hic meus primogenitus, Scythis ipsis minus mansuetus, patrem vivum totum e calcitrantem exsorbere enixus est. Nec tamen hac de causa sobolem meam esurientem exheredavi. Sed famem istam pro valido testimonio virilitatis roborisque potius habui, cibumque ad eam satiandam, salva paterna mea carne, petii. Et quia bilem illam scaturientem ad æs etiam concoquendum idoneam esse estimabam, unde æs alienum, ut minoris pretii, haberem, circumspexi. Rebus ita se habentibus, ab avunculo meo Johanne Doolittle, Armigero, impetravi ut pecunias necessarias suppeditaret, ne opus esset mihi universitatem relinquendi antequam ad gradum primum in artibus pervenissem. Tunc ego, salvum facere patronum meum munificum maxime cupiens, omnes libros primæ editionis operis mei non venditos una cum privilegio in omne ævum ejusdem imprimendi et edendi avunculo meo dicto pigneravi. Ex illo, die, atro lapide notando, curæ vociferantes familiæ singulis annis crescentis eo usque insultabant ut nunquam tam carum pignus e vinculis istis aheneis solvere possem.

Avunculo vero nuper mortuo, quum inter alios consanguineos testamenti ejus lectionem audiendi causa advenissem, erectis auribus verba talia sequentia accepi:—"Quoniam persuasum habeo meum dilectum nepotem Homerum, longa et intima rerum angustarum domi experientia, aptissimum esse qui divitias tueatur, beneficenterque ac prudenter iis divinis creditis utatur,—ergo, motus hisce cogitationibus, exque amore meo in illum magno, do, legoque nepoti caro meo supranominato omnes singularesque istas possessiones nec ponderabiles nec computabiles meas quæ sequuntur, scilicet: quingentos libros quos mihi pigneravit dictus Homerus, anno lucis 1792, cum privilegio edendi et repetendi opus istud 'scientificum' (quod dicunt) suum, si sic elegerit. Tamen D. O. M. precor oculos Homeri nepotis mei ita aperiat eumque moveat, ut libros istos in bibliotheca unus e plurimis castellis suis Hispaniensibus tuto abscondat."

His verbis (vix credibilibus) auditis, cor meum in pectore exsultavit. Deinde, quoniam tractatus Anglice scriptus spem auctoris fesellerat, quippe quum studium Historiæ Naturalis in Republica nostra inter factionis strepitum languescat, Latine versum edere statui, et eo potius quia nescio quomodo disciplina academica et duo diplomata proficiant, nisi quod peritos linguarum omnino mortuarum (et damnandarum, ut dicebat iste *πρωὺργος* Gulielmus Cobbett nos faciant.

Et mihi adhuc superstes est tota illa editio prima, quam quasi crepitaculum per quod dentes caninos dentibam retineo.

OPERIS SPECIMEN.

(*Ad exemplum Johannis Physiophili speciminis Monachologiae.*)

12. S. B. *Militaris*, WILBUR. *Carnifex*, JABLONSK. *Profanus*, DESFONT.

[Male hancce speciem *Cyclofem* Fabricius vocat, ut qui singulo oculo ad quod sui interest distinguitur. Melius vero Isaacus Outis nullum inter S. milit. S.que Belzebul (Fabric. 152) discrimen esse defendit.]

Habitat civitat. Americ. austral.

Aureis lineis splendidus; plerumque tamen sordidus, utpote lanienas valde frequentans, fetore sanguinis allectus. Amat quoque insuper septa apricari, neque inde, nisi maxima conatione detruditur. *Candidatus* ergo populariter vocatus. Caput cristam quasi pennarum ostendit. Pro cibo vaccam publicam calide mulget; abdomen enorme; facultas suctus haud facile estimanda. Otiosus, fatuus; ferox nihilominus, semperque dimicare paratus. Tortuose reptit.

Capite sepe maxima cum cura dissecto, ne illud rudimentum etiam cerebri commune omnibus prope insectis detegere poteram.

Unam de hoc S. milit. rem singularem notavi; nam S. Guineens. (Fabric. 143) servos facit, et idcirco a multis summa in reverentia habitus, quasi scintillas rationis pæne humane demonstrans.

24. S. B. *Criticus*, WILBUR. *Zoilus*, FABRIC. *Pygmaeus*, CARLSEN.

[Stultissime Johannes Stryx cum S. punctato (Fabric. 64-109) confundit. Specimina quamplurima scrutationi microscopicae subiecti, nunquam tamen unum ulla indicia puncti cujusvis prorsus ostendentem inveni.]

Præcipue formidolosus, insectatusque, in proxima rima anonymia sese abscondit, *ve, ve*, creberrime stridens. Ineptus, segnipes. Habitat ubique gentium; in sicco; nidum suum terebratione indefessa ædificans. Cibus. Libros depascit; siccos præcipue

MELIBŒUS-HIPPONAX.

THE
Biglow Papers,

EDITED,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, NOTES, GLOSSARY, AND
COPIOUS INDEX.

BY

HOMER WILBUR, A. M.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN JAALAM, AND (PROSPECTIVE) MEMBER
MANY LITERARY, LEARNED, AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES,

(for which see page 173.)

The ploughman's whistle, or the trivial flute,
Finds more respect than great Apollo's lute.

Quarles's Emblems, B. ii. E. 8.

Margaritas, munde porcine, calcâsti : en, siliquas accipe.

Jac. Car. Fil. ad Prob. Leg. § 1.

NOTE TO TITLE-PAGE.

IT will not have escaped the attentive eye, that I have, on the title-page, omitted those honorary appendages to the editorial name which not only add greatly to the value of every book, but whet and exacerbate the appetite of the reader. For not only does he surmise that an honorary membership of literary and scientific societies implies a certain amount of necessary distinction on the part of the recipient of such decorations, but he is willing to trust himself more entirely to an author who writes under the fearful responsibility of involving the reputation of such bodies as the *S. Archæol. Dahn.* or the *Acad. Lit. et Scient. Kamtschat.* I cannot but think that the early editions of Shakespeare and Milton would have met with more rapid and general acceptance, but for the barrenness of their respective title-pages; and I believe, that, even now, a publisher of the works of either of those justly distinguished men would find his account in procuring their admission to the membership of learned bodies on the Continent, — a proceeding no whit more incongruous than the reversal of the judgment against Socrates, when he was already more than twenty centuries beyond the reach of antidotes, and when his memory had acquired a deserved respectability. I conceive that it was a feeling of the importance of this precaution which induced Mr. Locke to style himself "Gent." on the title-page of his Essay, as who should say to his readers that they could receive his metaphysics on the honor of a gentleman.

Nevertheless, finding that, without descending to a smaller size of type than would have been compatible with

the dignity of the several societies to be named, I could not compress my intended list within the limits of a single page, and thinking, moreover, that the act would carry with it an air of decorous modesty, I have chosen to take the reader aside, as it were, into my private closet, and there not only exhibit to him the diplomas which I already possess, but also to furnish him with a prophetic vision of those which I may, without undue presumption, hope for, as not beyond the reach of human ambition and attainment. And I am the rather induced to this from the fact that my name has been unaccountably dropped from the last triennial catalogue of our beloved *Alma Mater*. Whether this is to be attributed to the difficulty of Latinizing any of those honorary adjuncts (with a complete list of which I took care to furnish the proper persons nearly a year beforehand), or whether it had its origin in any more culpable motives, I forbear to consider in this place, the matter being in course of painful investigation. But, however this may be, I felt the omission the more keenly, as I had, in expectation of the new catalogue, enriched the library of the Jaalam Athenæum with the old one then in my possession, by which means it has come about that my children will be deprived of a never-wearying winter-evening's amusement in looking out the name of their parent in that distinguished roll. Those harmless innocents had at least committed no — but I forbear, having intrusted my reflections and animadversions on this painful topic to the safe-keeping of my private diary, intended for posthumous publication. I state this fact here, in

order that certain nameless individuals, who are, perhaps, overmuch congratulating themselves upon my silence, may know that a rod is in pickle which the vigorous hand of a justly incensed posterity will apply to their memories.

The careful reader will note, that, in the list which I have prepared, I have included the names of several Cisatlantic societies to which a place is not commonly assigned in processions of this nature. I have ventured to do this, not only to encourage native ambition and genius, but also because I have never been able to perceive in what way distance (unless we suppose them at the end of a lever) could increase the weight of learned bodies. As far as I have been able to extend my researches among such stuffed specimens as occasionally reach America, I have discovered no generic difference between the antipodal *Fogrum Japonicum* and the *F. Americanum* sufficiently common in our own immediate neighborhood. Yet, with a becoming deference to the popular belief that distinctions of this sort are enhanced in value by every additional mile they travel, I have intermixed the names of some tolerably distant literary and other associations with the rest.

I add here, also, an advertisement, which, that it may be the more readily understood by those persons especially interested therein, I have written in that curtailed and otherwise maltreated canine Latin, to the writing and reading of which they are accustomed.

OMNIB. PER TOT. ORB. TERRAR.
CATALOG. ACADEM. EDD.

Minim. gent. diplom. ab incltiss.
acad. vest. orans, vir. honorand. oꝑero-

sis, at sol. ut sciat. quant. glor. nom. meum (dipl. fort. concess.) catal. vest. temp. futur. affer., ill. subjec., addit. omnib. titul. honorar. qu. adh. non tant. opt. quam probab. put.

* * * *Litt. Uncial. distinx. ut Præs. S. Hist. Nat. Jaal.*

HOMERUS WILBUR, Mr.,
Episc. Jaalam, S. T. D. 1850, et Yal. 1849, et Neo-Cæs. et Brun. et Gulielm. 1852, et Gul. et Mar. et Bowd. et Georgiop. et Viridimont. et Colomb. Nov. Ebor. 1853. et Amherst. et Watervill. et S. Jarlath. Hib. et S. Mar. et S. Joseph. et S. And. Scot. 1854, et Nashvill. et Dart. et Dickins. et Concord. et Wash. et Columbian. et Charlest. et Jeff. et Dubl. et Oxon. et Cantab. et Cæt. 1855, P. U. N. C. H. et J. U. D. Gott. et Osnab. et Heidelb. 1860, et Acad. BORE us. Berolin. Soc., et SS. RR. Lugd. Bat. et Patav. et Lond. et Edinb. et Ins. Feejee. et Null. Terr. et Pekin. Soc. Hon. et S. H. S. et S. P. A. et A. A. S. et S. Humb. Univ. et S. Omn. Rer. Quarund. q. Aliar. Promov. Passamaquod. et H. P. C. et I. O. H. et A. Δ. Φ. et II. K. P. et Φ. B. K. et Peucin. et Erosoph. et Philadelph. et Frat. in Unit. et Σ. T. et S. Archæolog. Athen. et Acad. Scient. et Lit. Panorm. et SS. R. H. Matrit. et Beeloochist. et Caffrar. et Caribb. et M. S. Reg. Paris. et S. Am. Antiserv. Soc. Hon. et P. D. Gott. et LL. D. 1852, et D. C. L. et Mus. Doc. Oxon. 1860, et M. M. S. S. et M. D. 1854, et Med. Fac. Univ. Harv. Soc. et S. pro Convers. Pollywog. Soc. Hon. et Higgl. Pigg. et LL. B. 1853, et S. pro Christianiz. Moschet. Soc., et SS. Antediluv. ubiq. Gent. Soc. Hon. et Civit. Cleric. Jaalam. et S. pro Diffus. General. Tenebr. Secret. Corr.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN, more than three years ago, my talented young parishioner, Mr. Biglow, came to me and submitted to my animadversions the first of his poems which he intended to commit to the more hazardous trial of a city newspaper, it never so much as entered my imagination to conceive that his productions would ever be gathered into a fair volume, and ushered into the august presence of the reading public by myself. So little are we short-sighted mortals able to predict the event! I confess that there is to me a quite new satisfaction in being associated (though only as sleeping partner) in a book which can stand by itself in an independent unity on the shelves of libraries. For there is always this drawback from the pleasure of printing a sermon, that, whereas the queasy stomach of this generation will not bear a discourse long enough to make a separate volume, those religious and godly-minded children (those Samuels, if I may call them so) of the brain must at first lie buried in an undistinguished heap, and then get such resurrection as is vouchsafed to them, mummy-wrapped with a score of others in a cheap binding, with no other mark of distinction than the word "*Miscellaneous*" printed upon the back. Far be it from me to claim any credit for the quite unexpected popularity which I am pleased to find these bucolic strains have attained unto. If I know myself, I am measurably free from the itch of vanity; yet I may be allowed to say that I was not backward to recognize in them a certain wild, puckery, acidulous (sometimes even verging toward that point which, in our rustic phrase, is termed *shut-eye*) flavor, not wholly unpleasing, nor unwhole-

some, to palates cloyed with the sugari-ness of tamed and cultivated fruit. It may be, also, that some touches of my own, here and there, may have led to their wider acceptance, albeit solely from my larger experience of literature and authorship.*

I was, at first, inclined to discourage Mr. Biglow's attempts, as knowing that the desire to poetize is one of the diseases naturally incident to adolescence, which, if the fitting remedies be not at once and with a bold hand applied, may become chronic, and render one, who might else have become in due time an ornament of the social circle, a painful object even to nearest friends and relatives. But thinking, on a further experience, that there was a germ of promise in him which required only culture and the pulling up of weeds from around it, I thought it best to set before him the acknowledged examples of English composition in verse, and leave the rest to natural emulation. With this view, I accordingly lent him some volumes of Pope and Goldsmith, to the assiduous study of which he promised to devote his evenings. Not long afterward, he brought me some verses written upon that model, a specimen of which I subjoin, having changed some phrases of less elegancy, and a few rhymes objectionable to the cultivated ear. The poem consisted of childish reminiscences, and the sketches which follow

* The reader curious in such matters may refer (if he can find them) to "A Sermon preached on the Anniversary of the Dark Day," "An Artillery Election Sermon," "A Discourse on the Late Eclipse," "Dorcas, a Funeral Sermon on the Death of Madam Submit Tidd, Relict of the late Experience Tidd, Esq.," &c., &c.

will not seem destitute of truth to those whose fortunate education began in a country village. And, first, let us hang up his charcoal portrait of the school-dame.

"Propped on the marsh, a dwelling now. I see
The humble school-house of my A, B, C,
Where well-drilled urchins, each behind his
tire,

Waited in ranks the wished command to fire,
Then all together, when the signal came,
Discharged their *a-b abs* against the dame.
Daughter of Danaus, who could daily pour
In treacherous pipkins her Pierian store,
She, 'mid the volleyed learning firm and calm,
Patted the furloughed ferule on her palm,
And, to our wonder, could divine at once
Who flashed the pan, and who was down-
right dunce.

"There young Devotion learned to climb
with ease

The gnarly limbs of Scripture family-trees,
And he was most commended and admired
Who soonest to the topmost twig perspired ;
Each name was called as many various ways
As pleased the reader's ear on different days,
So that the weather, or the ferule's stings,
Colds in the head, or fifty other things,
Transformed the helpless Hebrew thrice a
week

To guttural Pequot or resounding Greek,
The vibrant accent skipping here and there,
Just as it pleased invention or despair ;
No controversial Hebraist was the Dame ;
With or without the points pleased her the
same ;

If any tyro found a name too tough,
And looked at her, pride furnished skill
enough ;
She nerved her larynx for the desperate thing,
And cleared the five-barred syllables at a
spring.

"Ah, dear old times ! there once it was my
hap,
Perched on a stool, to wear the long-eared
cap ;

From books degraded, there I sat at ease,
A drone, the envy of compulsory bees ;
Rewards of merit, too, full many a time,
Each with its woodcut and its moral rhyme,
And pierced half-dollars hung on ribbons gay
About my neck — to be restored next day,
I carried home, rewards as shining then
As those which deck the lifelong pains of
men,

More solid than the redemanded praise
With which the world beribbons later days.

"Ah, dear old times ! how brightly ye return !
How, rubbed afresh, your phosphor traces
burn !

The ramble schoolward through dewspark-
ling meads

The willow-wands turned Cinderella steeds ;
The impromptu pinbent hook, the deep re-
morse

O'er the chance-captured minnow's inchloug
corse ;

The pockets, plethoric with marbles round,
That still a space for ball and pegtop found,
Nor satiate yet, could manage to confine
Horsechestnuts, flagroot, and the kite's
wound twine,

And, like the prophet's carpet could take in,
Enlarging still, the popgun's magazine ;
The dinner carried in the small tin pail,
Shared with the dog, whose most beseeching
tail

And dripping tongue and eager ears belied
The assumed indifference of canine pride ;
The caper homeward, shortened if the cart
Of Neighbor Pomeroy, trundling from the
mart,

O'ertook me, — then, translated to the seat
I praised the steed, how stanch he was and
fleet,

While the bluff farmer, with superior grin,
Explained where horses should be thick,
where thin,

And warned me (joke he always had in store)
To shun a beast that four white stockings
wore.

What a fine natural courtesy was his !
His nod was pleasure, and his full bow bliss ;
How did his well-thumbed hat, with ardor
rapt,

Its decorous curve to every rank adapt !
How did it graduate with a courtly ease
The whole long scale of social differences,
Yet so gave each his measure running o'er,
None thought his own was less, his neighbor's
more ;

The squire was flattered, and the pauper
knew

Old times acknowledged 'neath the thread-
bare blue !

Dropped at the corner of the embowered
lane,

Whistling I wade the knee-deep leaves again,
While eager Argus, who has missed all day
The sharer of his condescending play,
Comes leaping onward with a bark elate
And boisterous tail to greet me at the gate ;
That I was true in absence to our love
Let the thick dog's-ears in my primer
prove."

I add only one further extract, which
will possess a melancholy interest to all
such as have endeavored to glean the
materials of revolutionary history from
the lips of aged persons, who took a
part in the actual making of it, and,
finding the manufacture profitable, con-
tinued the supply in an adequate pro-
portion to the demand.

"Old Joe is gone, who saw hot Percy goad
His slow artillery up the Concord road.

A tale which grew in wonder, year by year,
 As, every time he told it, Joe drew near
 To the main fight, till, faded and grown gray,
 The original scene to bolder tints gave way;
 Then Joe had heard the foe's scared double-
 quick
 Beat on stove drum with one uncaptured
 stick,
 And, ere death came the lengthening tale to
 lop,
 Himself had fired, and seen a red-coat drop;
 Had Joe lived long enough, that scrambling
 fight
 Had squared more nearly with his sense of
 right,
 And vanquished Percy, to complete the tale,
 Had hammered stone for life in Concord jail."

I do not know that the foregoing extracts ought not to be called my own rather than Mr. Biglow's, as, indeed, he maintained stoutly that my file had left nothing of his in them. I should not, perhaps, have felt entitled to take so great liberties with them, had I not more than suspected an hereditary vein of poetry in myself, a very near ancestor having written a Latin poem in the Harvard *Gratulation* on the accession of George the Third. Suffice it to say, that, whether not satisfied with such limited approbation as I could conscientiously bestow, or from a sense of natural inaptitude, certain it is that my young friend could never be induced to any further essays in this kind. He affirmed that it was to him like writing in a foreign tongue, — that Mr. Pope's versification was like the regular ticking of one of Willard's clocks, in which one could fancy, after long listening, a certain kind of rhythm or tune, but which yet was only a poverty-stricken tick, tick, after all, — and that he had never seen a sweet-water on a trellis growing so fairly, or in forms so pleasing to his eye, as a fox-grape over a scrub-oak in a swamp. He added I know not what, to the effect that the sweet-water would only be the more disfigured by having its leaves starched and ironed out, and that Pegasus (so he called him) hardly looked right with his mane and tail in curl-papers. These and other such opinions I did not long strive to eradicate, attributing them rather to a defective education and senses untuned by too long familiar-

ity with purely natural objects, than to a perverted moral sense. I was the more inclined to this leniency since sufficient evidence was not to seek, that his verses, as wanting as they certainly were in classic polish and point, had somehow taken hold of the public ear in a surprising manner. So, only setting him right as to the quantity of the proper name Pegasus, I left him to follow the bent of his natural genius.

Yet could I not surrender him wholly to the tutelage of the pagan (which, literally interpreted, signifies village) muse without yet a further effort for his conversion, and to this end I resolved that whatever of poetic fire yet burned in myself, aided by the assiduous bellows of correct models, should be put in requisition. Accordingly, when my ingenious young parishioner brought to my study a copy of verses which he had written touching the acquisition of territory resulting from the Mexican war, and the folly of leaving the question of slavery or freedom to the adjudication of chance, I did myself indite a short fable or apologue after the manner of Gay and Prior, to the end that he might see how easily even such subjects as he treated of were capable of a more refined style and more elegant expression. Mr. Biglow's production was as follows:—

THE TWO GUNNERS,

A FABLE.

TWO fellers, Isrel named and Joe,
 One Sundy mornin' 'greed to go
 Agunnin' soon's the bells wuz done
 And meetin' finally begun,
 So'st no one would n't be about
 Ther Sabbath-breakin' to spy out.

Joe did n't want to go a mite;
 He felt ez though 't warnt skeercely right,
 But, when his doubts he went to speak on,
 Isrel he up and called him Deacon,
 An' kep' apokin' fun like sin
 An' then arubbin' on it in,
 Till Joe, less skeered o' doin' wrong
 Than bein' laughed at, went along.

Past noontime they went trampin' round
 An' nary thing to pop at found,
 Till, fairly tired o' their spree,
 They leaned their guns agin a tree,

An' jest ez they wuz settin' down
To take their noonin', Joe looked roun'
And see (across lots in a pond
That warn't mor'n twenty rod beyond),
A goose that on the water sot
Ez ef awaitin' to be shot.

Isrel he ups and grabs his gun ;
Sez he, "By ginger, here 's some fun !"
"Don't fire," sez Joe, "it aint no use,
Thet 's Deacon Peleg's tame wild-goose";
Sez Isrel, "I don't care a cent,
I've sighted an' I'll let her went";
Bang! went queen's-arm, ole gander flopped
His wings a spell, an' quorked, an' dropped.

Sez Joe, "I would n't ha' been hired
At that poor critter to ha' fired,
But, sence it's clean gin up the ghost,
We'll hev the tallest kind o' roast;
I guess our waistbands'll be tight
'Fore it comes ten o'clock ternaht."

"I won't agree to no such bender."
Sez Isrel, "keep it tell it's tender";
'T aint with a snap afore it's ripe."
Sez Joe, "I'd jest ez lives eat tripe;
You air a buster ter suppose
I'd eat what makes me hol' my nose!"

So they disputed to an' fro
Till cunnin' Isrel sez to Joe,
"Don't le's stay here an' play the fool,
Le's wait till both on us git cool,
Jest for a day or two le's hide it
An' then toss up an' so decide it."
"Agreed!" sez Joe, an' so they did,
An' the ole goose wuz safely hid.

Now 't wuz the hottest kind o' weather,
An' when at last they come together,
It did n't signify which won,
Fer all the mischief hed ben done:
The goose wuz there, but, fer his soul,
Joe would n't ha' tetched it with a pole;
But Isrel kind o' liked the smell on't
An' made *his* dinner very well on't.

My own humble attempt was in man-
ner and form following, and I print it
here, I sincerely trust, out of no vain-
glory, but solely with the hope of doing
good.

LEAVING THE MATTER OPEN.

A TALE.

BY HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

TWO brothers once, an ill-matched pair,
Together dwelt (no matter where),
To whom an Uncle Sam, or some one,
Had let a house and farm in common.
The two in principles and habits

Were different as rats from rabbits;
Stout Farmer North, with frugal care,
Laid up provision for his heir,
Not scorning with hard sun-browned hands
To scrape acquaintance with his lands;
Whatever thing he had to do
He did, and made it pay him, too;
He sold his waste stone by the pound,
His drains made water-wheels spin round,
His ice in summer-time he sold,
His wood brought profit when 't was cold,
He dug and delved from morn till night,
Strove to make profit square with right,
Lived on his means, cut no great dash,
And paid his debts in honest cash.

On tother hand, his brother South
Lived very much from hand to mouth,
Played gentleman, nursed dainty hands,
Borrowed North's money on his lands,
And culled his morals and his graces
From cock-pits, bar-rooms, fights, and races;
His sole work in the farming line
Was keeping droves of long-legged swine,
Which brought great bothers and expenses
To North in looking after fences,
And, when they happened to break through,
Cost him both time and temper too,
For South insisted it was plain
He ought to drive them home again,
And North consented to the work
Because he loved to buy cheap pork.

Meanwhile, South's swine increasing fast,
His farm became too small at last,
So, having thought the matter over,
And feeling bound to live in clover
And never pay the clover's worth,
He said one day to Brother North:—

"Our families are both increasing,
And, though we labor without ceasing,
Our produce soon will be too scant
To keep our children out of want;
They who wish fortune to be lasting
Must be both prudent and forecasting;
We soon shall need more land; a lot
I know, that cheaply can be bot';
You lend the cash, I'll buy the acres,
And we'll be equally partakers."

Poor North, whose Anglo-Saxon blood
Gave him a hankering after mud,
Wavered a moment, then consented,
And, when the cash was paid, repented;
To make the new land worth a pin,
Thought he, it must be all fenced in,
For, if South's swine once get the run on't
No kind of farming can be done on't;
If that don't suit the other side,
'T is best we instantly divide.

But somehow South could ne'er incline
This way or that to run the line,
And always found some new pretence
'Gainst setting the division fence;
At last he said:—

"For peace's sake,
 Liberal concessions I will make;
 Though I believe, upon my soul,
 I've a just title to the whole,
 I'll make an offer which I call
 Gen'rous, — we'll have no fence at all;
 Then both of us, whene'er we choose,
 Can take what part we want to use;
 If you should chance to need it first,
 Pick you the best, I'll take the worst."

"Agreed!" cried North; thought he, This
 fall

With wheat and rye I'll sow it all;
 In that way I shall get the start,
 And South may whistle for his part.
 So thought, so done, the field was sown,
 And, winter having come and gone,
 Sly North walked blithely forth to spy,
 The progress of his wheat and rye;
 Heavens, what a sight! his brother's swine
 Had asked themselves all out to dine,
 Such grunting, munching, rooting, shoving,
 The soil seemed all alive and moving,
 As for his grain, such work they'd made
 on't,
 He could n't spy a single blade on't.

Off in a rage he rushed to South,
 "My wheat and rye" — grief choked his
 mouth;
 "Pray don't mind me," said South, "but
 plant
 All of the new land that you want";
 "Yes, but your hogs," cried North;

"The grain
 Won't hurt them," answered South again;
 "But they destroy my grain";

"No doubt;
 'T is fortunate you've found it out;
 Misfortunes teach, and only they,
 You must not sow it in their way";
 "Nay, you," says North, "must keep them
 out";

"Did I create them with a snout?"
 Asked South demurely; "as agreed,
 The land is open to your seed,
 And would you fain prevent my pigs
 From running there their harmless rigs?
 God knows I view this compromise
 With not the most approving eyes;
 I gave up my unquestioned rights
 For sake of quiet days and nights;
 I offered then, you know 't is true,
 To cut the piece of land in two."
 "Then cut it now," growls North;

"Abate
 Your heat," says South, "'t is now too late;
 I offered you the rocky corner,
 But you, of your own good the scorne,
 Refused to take it; I am sorry;
 No doubt you might have found a quarry,
 Perhaps a gold-mine, for aught I know,

Containing heaps of native rhino;
 You can't expect me to resign
 My right" —

"But where," quoth North, "are mine?"
 "Your rights," says tother, "well, that's
 funny,
 I bought the land" —

"I paid the money";
 "That," answered South, "is from the point,
 The ownership, you'll grant, is joint;
 I'm sure my only hope and trust is
 Not law so much as abstract justice,
 Though, you remember, 't was agreed
 That so and so — consult the deed;
 Objections now are out of date,
 They might have answered once, but Fate
 Quashes them at the point we've got to;
Obsta principiis, that's my motto."
 So saying, South began to whistle
 And looked as obstinate as gristle,
 While North went homeward, each brown
 paw
 Clenched like a knot of natural law,
 And all the while, in either ear,
 Heard something clicking wondrous clear.

To turn now to other matters, there
 are two things upon which it would
 seem fitting to dilate somewhat more
 largely in this place, — the Yankee
 character and the Yankee dialect.
 And, first, of the Yankee character,
 which has wanted neither open malign-
 ers, nor even more dangerous enemies
 in the persons of those unskilful paint-
 ers who have given to it that hardness,
 angularity, and want of proper perspec-
 tive, which, in truth, belonged, not to
 their subject, but to their own niggard
 and unskilful pencil.

New England was not so much the
 colony of a mother country, as a Hagar
 driven forth into the wilderness. The
 little self-exiled band which came
 hither in 1620 came, not to seek gold,
 but to found a democracy. They came
 that they might have the privilege to
 work and pray, to sit upon hard benches
 and listen to painful preachers as long
 as they would, yea, even unto thirty-
 seventhly, if the spirit so willed it.
 And surely, if the Greek might boast
 his Thermopylæ, where three hundred
 men fell in resisting the Persian, we
 may well be proud of our Plymouth
 Rock, where a handful of men, women,
 and children not merely faced, but van-

quished, winter, famine, the wildness, and the yet more invincible *storge* that drew them back to the green island far away. These found no lotus growing upon the surly shore, the taste of which could make them forget their little native Ithaca; nor were they so wanting to themselves in faith as to burn their ship, but could see the fair west wind belly the homeward sail, and then turn unrepining to grapple with the terrible Unknown.

As Want was the prime foe these hardy exodists had to fortress themselves against, so it is little wonder if that traditional feud is long in wearing out of the stock. The wounds of the old warfare were long a-healing, and an east wind of hard times puts a new ache in every one of them. Thrift was the first lesson in their hornbook, pointed out, letter after letter, by the lean finger of the hard schoolmaster, Necessity. Neither were those plump, rosy-gilled Englishmen that came hither, but a hard-faced, atrabilious, earnest-eyed race, stiff from long wrestling with the Lord in prayer, and who had taught Satan to dread the new Puritan hug. Add two hundred years' influence of soil, climate, and exposure, with its necessary result of idiosyncrasies, and we have the present Yankee, full of expedients, half-master of all trades, inventive in all but the beautiful, full of shifts, not yet capable of comfort, armed at all points against the old enemy Hunger, longanimous, good at patching, not so careful for what is best as for what will *do*, with a clasp to his purse and a button to his pocket, not skilled to build against Time, as in old countries, but against sore-pressing Need, accustomed to move the world with no *ποῦ στῶ* but his own two feet, and no lever but his own long forecast. A strange hybrid, indeed, did circumstance beget, here in the New World, upon the old Puritan stock, and the earth never before saw such mystic-practicalism, such niggard-geniality, such calculating-fanaticism, such cast-iron-enthusiasm, such sour-faced-humic, such close-fisted-generosity. This

new *Græculus esuriens* will make a living out of anything. He will invent new trades as well as tools. His brain is his capital, and he will get education at all risks. Put him on Juan Fernandez, and he would make a spelling-book first, and a salt-pan afterward. *In cælum, jussuris, ibit*, — or the other way either, — it is all one, so anything is to be got by it. Yet, after all, thin, speculative Jonathan is more like the Englishman of two centuries ago than John Bull himself is. He has lost somewhat in solidity, has become fluent and adaptable, but more of the original groundwork of character remains. He feels more at home with Fulke Greville, Herbert of Cherbury, Quarles, George Herbert, and Browne, than with his modern English cousins. He is nearer than John, by at least a hundred years, to Naseby, Marston Moor, Worcester, and the time when, if ever, there were true Englishmen. John Bull has suffered the idea of the Invisible to be very much fattened out of him. Jonathan is conscious still that he lives in the world of the Unseen as well as of the Seen. To move John you must make your fulcrum of solid beef and pudding; an abstract idea will do for Jonathan.

* * * TO THE INDULGENT READER.

MY friend, the Rev. Mr. Wilbur, having been seized with a dangerous fit of illness, before this Introduction had passed through the press, and being incapacitated for all literary exertion, sent to me his notes, memoranda, &c., and requested me to fashion them into some shape more fitting for the general eye. This, owing to the fragmentary and disjointed state of his manuscripts, I have felt wholly unable to do; yet, being unwilling that the reader should be deprived of such parts of his lucubrations as seemed more finished, and not well discerning how to segregate these from the rest, I have concluded to send them all to the press precisely as they are.

COLUMBUS NYE,
Pastor of a Church in Bungtown
Corner.

It remains to speak of the Yankee dialect. And, first, it may be premised, in a general way, that any one much read in the writings of the early colonists need not be told that the far greater share of the words and phrases now esteemed peculiar to New England, and local there, were brought from the mother country. A person familiar with the dialect of certain portions of Massachusetts will not fail to recognize, in ordinary discourse, many words now noted in English vocabularies as archaic, the greater part of which were in common use about the time of the King James translation of the Bible. Shakespeare stands less in need of a glossary to most New Englanders than to many a native of the Old Country. The peculiarities of our speech, however, are rapidly wearing out. As there is no country where reading is so universal and newspapers are so multitudinous, so no phrase remains long local, but is transplanted in the mail-bags to every remotest corner of the land. Consequently our dialect approaches nearer to uniformity than that of any other nation.

The English have complained of us for coining new words. Many of those so stigmatized were old ones by them forgotten, and all make now an unquestioned part of the currency, wherever English is spoken. Undoubtedly, we have a right to make new words, as they are needed by the fresh aspects under which life presents itself here in the New World; and, indeed, wherever a language is alive, it grows. It might be questioned whether we could not establish a stronger title to the ownership of the English tongue than the mother-landers themselves. Here, past all question, is to be its great home and centre. And not only is it already spoken here by greater numbers, but with a far higher popular average of correctness than in Britain. The great writers of it, too, we might claim as ours, were ownership to be settled by the number of readers and lovers.

As regards the provincialisms to be met with in this volume, I may say

that the reader will not find one which is not (as I believe) either native or imported with the early settlers, nor one which I have not, with my own ears, heard in familiar use. In the metrical portion of the book, I have endeavored to adapt the spelling as nearly as possible to the ordinary mode of pronunciation. Let the reader who deems me over-particular remember this caution of Martial:—

*"Quem recitas, meus est, O Fidentine, libellus;
Sed male cum recitas, incipit esse tuus."*

A few further explanatory remarks will not be impertinent.

I shall barely lay down a few general rules for the reader's guidance.

1. The genuine Yankee never gives the rough sound to the *r* when he can help it, and often displays considerable ingenuity in avoiding it even before a vowel.

2. He seldom sounds the final *g*, a piece of self-denial, if we consider his partiality for nasals. The same of the final *d*, as *han'* and *stan'* for *hand* and *stand*.

3. The *h* in such words as *while*, *when*, *wiere*, he omits altogether.

4. In regard to *a*, he shows some inconsistency, sometimes giving a close and obscure sound, as *hev* for *have*, *henty* for *handy*, *ez* for *as*, *thet* for *that*, and again giving it the broad sound it has in *father*, as *hânsome* for *handsome*.

5. To the sound *ou* he prefixes an *e* (hard to exemplify otherwise than orally).

The following passage in Shakespeare he would recite thus:—

"Neow is the winta uv eour discontent
Med glorious summa by this sun o' Yock,
An' all the cleouds thet leowered upun eour
heouse
In the deep buzzum o' the oshin buried;
Neow air eour brews beound 'ith victorious
wreaths;
Eour breused arms hung up fer monimunce;
Eour starn alarums ch. nged to merry meet-
ins,
Eour drefle marches to delighfle masures-

Grim-visaged war heth smeathed his wrinkled front,
An' neow, instid o' mountin' barebid steeds
To fright the souls o' ferlie edverseries,
He capers nimly in a lady's chamber,
To the lascivious pleasin' uv a loot."

6. *Au*, in such words as *daughter* and *slaughter*, he pronounces *ah*.

7. To the dish thus seasoned add a drawl *ad libitum*.

[Mr. Wilbur's notes here become entirely fragmentary. — C. N.]

a. Unable to procure a likeness of Mr. Biglow, I thought the curious reader might be gratified with a sight of the editorial effigies. And here a choice between two was offered, — the one a profile (entirely black) cut by Doyle, the other a portrait painted by a native artist of much promise. The first of these seemed wanting in expression, and in the second a slight obliquity of the visual organs has been heightened (perhaps from an over-desire of force on the part of the artist) into too close an approach to actual *strabismus*. This slight divergence in my optical apparatus from the ordinary model — however I may have been taught to regard it in the light of a mercy rather than a cross, since it enabled me to give as much of directness and personal application to my discourses as met the wants of my congregation, without risk of offending any by being supposed to have him or her in my eye (as the saying is) — seemed yet to Mrs. Wilbur a sufficient objection to the engraving of the aforesaid painting. We read of many who either absolutely refused to allow the copying of their features, as especially did Plotinus and Agesilaus among the ancients, not to mention the more modern instances of Scioppius, Palæottus, Pinellus, Velserus, Gataker, and others, or were indifferent thereto, as Cromwell.

β. Yet was Cæsar desirous of concealing his baldness. *Per contra*, my Lord Protector's carefulness in the matter of his wart might be cited. Men generally more desirous of being *improved* in

their portraits than characters. Shall probably find very unflattered likenesses of ourselves in Recording Angel's gallery.

γ. Whether any of our national peculiarities may be traced to our use of stoves, as a certain closeness of the lips in pronunciation, and a smothered smoulderingness of disposition seldom roused to open flame? An unrestrained intercourse with fire probably conducive to generosity and hospitality of soul. Ancient Mexicans used stoves, as the friar Augustin Ruiz reports, Hakluyt, III., 468, — but Popish priests not always reliable authority.

To-day picked my Isabella grapes. Crop injured by attacks of rose-bug in the spring. Whether Noah was justifiable in preserving this class of insects?

δ. Concerning Mr. Biglow's pedigree. Tolerably certain that there was never a poet among his ancestors. An ordination hymn attributed to a maternal uncle, but perhaps a sort of production not demanding the creative faculty.

His grandfather a painter of the grandiose or Michael Angelo school. Seldom painted objects smaller than houses or barns, and these with uncommon expression.

ε. Of the Wilburs no complete pedigree. The crest said to be a *wild boar*, whence, perhaps, the name. (?) A connection with the Earls of Wilbraham (*quasi* wild boar ham) might be made out. This suggestion worth following up. In 1677, John W. m. Expect —, had issue, 1. John, 2. Haggai, 3. Expect, 4. Ruhamah, 5. Desire.

"Hear lyes y^e bodye of Mrs Expect Wilber,
Y^e crewell salvages they kil'd her
Together wth other Christian soles eleaven,
October y^e ix daye, 1707.

Y^e stream of Jordan sh' as crost ore
And now expects me on y^e other shore :
I live in hope her soon to join ;
Her earthlye yeeres were forty and nine."

From Gravestone in Pekussett, North Parish.

This is unquestionably the same John who afterward (1711) married Tabitha Hagg or Ragg.

But if this were the case, she seems to have died early; for only three years after, namely, 1714, we have evidence that he married Winitred, daughter of Lieutenant Tipping.

He seems to have been a man of substance, for we find him in 1696 conveying "one undivided eightieth part of a salt-meadow" in Yabbok, and he commanded a sloop in 1702.

Those who doubt the importance of genealogical studies *fuste potius quam argumento erudiendi*.

I trace him as far as 1723, and there lose him. In that year he was chosen selectman.

No gravestone. Perhaps overthrown when new hearse-house was built, 1802.

He was probably the son of John, who came from Bilham Comit. Salop. circa 1642.

This first John was a man of considerable importance, being twice mentioned with the honorable prefix of *Mr.* in the town records. Name spelt with two *l*-s.

"Hear lyeth y^e bod [stone unhappily broken.]

Mr. Ihon Willber [Esq.] [I inclose this in brackets as doubtful. To me it seems clear.]

Ob't die [illegible; looks like xviii.]
iii [prob. 1693.]

. paynt
. diseased seinte :
A friend and [fath]er untoe all y^e oprest,
Hee gave y^e wicked familists noe reast,
When Sat [an bl]ewe his Antinomian blaste,
Wee clong to [Willber as a stead]jast maste.
[A]gaynst y^e horrid Qua[kers]"

It is greatly to be lamented that this curious epitaph is mutilated. It is said that the sacrilegious British soldiers made a target of this stone during the war of Independence. How odious an animosity which pauses not at the grave! How brutal that which spares not the monuments of authentic history! This is not improbably from the pen of Rev Moody Pyram, who is mentioned by Hubbard as having been noted for a silver vein of poetry. If his papers be still extant, a copy might possibly be recovered.

THE BIGLOW PAPERS.

No. I.

A LETTER

FROM MR. EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM
TO THE HON. JOSEPH T. BUCKING-
HAM, EDITOR OF THE BOSTON COUN-
TIER, INCLOSING A POEM OF HIS SON,
MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

JAYLEM, June 1846.

MISTER EDDYTER:—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fifin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hed n't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he 'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosity wood n't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eena-most enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figured onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home consider-
abal riled, and arter I 'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in fi-time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hosee 's gut the chollery or suthin another ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses I, he 's oney amakin pottery* ses i, he 's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin, and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosity he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on

end and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum o' the last varses, but he told Hosee he did n't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosity ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes or sum sech feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' did n't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this villadge, and I 've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer 'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you 'd jest let folks know who hosity's father is, cos my ant Keziah used to say it 's nater to be curus ses she, she aint livin though and he 's a likely kind o' lad.

EZEKIEL BIGLOW.

THRASH away, you 'll *hev* to rattle

On them kittle-drums o' yourn, —
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle

Thet is ketched with mouldy corn ;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,

Let folks see how spry you be, —
Guess you 'll toot till you are yellor
'Fore you git ahold o' me !

Thet air flag 's a leetle rotten,
Hope it aint your Sunday's best ; —

* *Aut insanit, aut versos facit.* — H. W.

Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
 To stuff out a soger's chest:
 Since we farmers hev to pay fer 't,
 Ef you must wear humps like these,
 Sposin' you should try salt hay fer 't,
 It would du ez slick ez grease.

'T would n't suit them Southun fellers,
 They 're a dresse graspin' set,
 We must ollers blow the bellers
 Wen they want their irons het;
 May be it 's all right ez preachin',
 But *my* narves it kind o' grates,
 Wen I see the overreachin'
 O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
 Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth
 (Helped by Yankee renegaders),
 Thru the vartu o' the North!
 We begin to think it 's nater
 To take sarse an' not be riled;—
 Who 'd expect to see a tater
 All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
 There you hev it plain an' flat;
 I don't want to go no furdur
 Than my Testymnt fer that;
 God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
 It 's ez long ez it is broad,
 An' you 've gut to git up airy
 Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
 Make the thing a grain more right;
 'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
 Will excuse ye in His sight;
 Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
 An' go stick a feller thru,
 Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
 God 'll send the bill to you.

Wut 's the use o' meetin'-goin'
 Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
 Ef it 's right to get amowin'
 Feller-men like oats an' rye?
 I dunno but wut it 's pooty
 Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
 But it 's curus Christian dooty
 This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy
 Tell they 're pupple in the face,—

It 's a grand gret cemetary
 Fer the barthrights of our race;
 They jest want this Californy
 So 's to lug new slave-states in
 To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
 An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee
 Take sech everlastin' pains,
 All to git the Devil's thankee
 Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?
 Wy, it 's jest ez clear ez figgers,
 Clear ez one an' one make two,
 Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
 Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I've come to
 Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
 An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
 Any gump could larn by heart;
 Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
 Hev one glory an' one shame,
 Ev'y thin' thet 's done inhuman
 Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
 You 're agoin' to git your right,
 Nor by lookin' down on black folks
 Coz you 're put upon by wite;
 Slavery aint o' nary color,
 'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
 All it keers fer in a feller
 'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
 I expect you 'll hev to wait;
 Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
 You 'll begin to kal'late;
 S'pose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
 All the carkiss from your bones,
 Coz you helped to give a lickin'
 To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
 Wether I 'd be sech a goose
 Ez to jine ye,—guess you 'd fancy
 The eternal bung wuz loose!
 She wants me fer home consumption,
 Let alone the hay's to mow,—
 Ef you 're arter folks o' gumption,
 You 've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them c-citors thet 's crowin'
 Like a coc'ere! three months old,—

Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
 Though they *be* so blasted bold ;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
 'Fore they think on 't they will sprout
 (Like a peach thet's got the yellors),
 With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
 Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
 Help the men thet's ollers dealin'
 Insults on your fathers' graves ;
 Help the strong to grind the feeble,
 Help the many agin the few,
 Help the men thet call your people
 Witewashed slaves an' peddlin'
 crew !

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
 She 's akneelin' with the rest,
 She, thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
 In her grand old eagle-nest ;
 She thet ough' to stand so fearless
 Wile the wracks are round her hurled,
 Holdin' up a beacon peerless
 To the oppressed of all the world !

Haint they sold your colored seamen ?
 Haint they made your envys wiz ?
Wut 'll make ye act like freemen ?
Wut 'll git your dander riz ?
 Come, I 'll tell ye wut I 'm thinkin'
 Is our dooty in this fix,
 They 'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'
 In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
 Call all true men to disown
 The tradocers of our people,
 The enslavers o' their own ;
 Let our dear old Bay State proudly
 Put the trumpet to her mouth,
 Let her ring this messidge loudly
 In the ears of all the South : —

" I 'll return ye good fer evil
 Much ez we frail mortils can,
 But I wun't go help the Devil
 Makin' man the cus o' man ;
 Call me coward, call me traiter,
 Jest ez suits your mean idees, —
 Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
 An' the friend o' God an' Peace ! "

Ef I 'd *my* way I hed ruther
 We should go to work an' part, —

They take one way, we take t'other, —
 Guess it would n't break my heart ;
 Man hed ough' to put asunder
 Them thet God has noways jined ;
 An' I should n't gretly wonder
 Ef there 's thousands o' my mind.

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*. Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that it was *impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time*. Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be *κατ' ἔξοχὴν* that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Koenigsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation has been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that " God would consider a gentleman and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in " ? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus*. — H. W.]

No. II.

A LETTER

FROM MR. HOSEA BIGLOW TO THE
 HON. J. T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF
 THE BOSTON COURIER, COVERING A
 LETTER FROM MR. B. SAWIN, PRI-
 VATE IN THE MASSACHUSETTS REGI-
 MENT.

[This letter of Mr. Sawin's was not originally written in verse. Mr. Biglow, thinking it peculiarly susceptible of metrical adornment, translated it, so to speak, into his own vernacular tongue. This is not the time to consider the question, whether rhyme be a mode of expression natural to the human

race. If leisure from other and more important avocations be granted, I will handle the matter more at large in an appendix to the present volume. In this place I will barely remark, that I have sometimes noticed in the unlanguageed prattlings of infants a fondness for alliteration, assonance, and even rhyme, in which natural predisposition we may trace the three degrees through which our Anglo-Saxon verse rose to its culmination in the poetry of Pope. I would not be understood as questioning in these remarks that pious theory which supposes that children, if left entirely to themselves, would naturally discourse in Hebrew. For this the authority of one experiment is claimed, and I could, with Sir Thomas Browne, desire its establishment, inasmuch as the acquirement of that sacred tongue would thereby be facilitated. I am aware that Herodotus states the conclusion of Psammeticus to have been in favor of a dialect of the Phrygian. But, beside the chance that a trial of this importance would hardly be blessed to a Pagan monarch whose only motive was curiosity, we have on the Hebrew side the comparatively recent investigation of James the Fourth of Scotland. I will add to this prefatory remark, that Mr. Sawin, though a native of Jaalam, has never been a stated attendant on the religious exercises of my congregation. I consider my humble efforts prospered in that not one of my sheep hath ever indued the wolf's clothing of war, save for the comparatively innocent diversion of a militia training. Not that my flock are backward to undergo the hardships of *defensive* warfare. They serve cheerfully in the great army which fights even unto death *pro aris et fociis*, accoutred with the spade, the axe, the plane, the sledge, the spelling-book, and other such effectual weapons against want and ignorance and unthrift. I have taught them (under God) to esteem our human institutions as but tents of a night, to be stricken whenever Truth puts the bugle to her lips and sounds a march to the heights of wider-viewed intelligence and more perfect organization. — H. W.]

MISTER BUCKINUM, the follerin Billet was writ hum by a Yung feller of our town that wuz cussed fool enuff to goe atrottin inter Miss Chiff arter a Drum aud fife. it ain't Nater for a feller to let on that he 's sick o' any bizness that He went intu off his own free will and a Cord, but I rather cal'late he 's middlin tired o' volunterin By this Time. I bleeve u may put dependunts on his statemente. For I never heered nothin bad on him let Alone his havin what Parson Wilbur cal's *pong-shong* for cocktales, and he ses it wuz a

soshiashun of idees sot him agoin arter the Crootin Sargient cos he wore a cocktale onto his hat.

his Folks gin the letter to me and i shew it to parson Wilbur and he ses it oughter Bee printed. send It to mister Buckinum, ses he, i don't ollers agree with him, ses he, but by Time,* ses he, I *du* like a feller that aint a Feared.

I have intusspussed a Few reflecks shuns hear and thair. We 're kind o' prest with Hayin.

Ewers respectfly
HOSEA BIGLOW.

THIS kind o' sogerin' aint a mite like our October trainin',
A chap could clear right out from there ef 't only looked liked rainin',
An' th' Cunnles, tu, could kiver up their shappoes with bandanners,
An' send the insines skootin' to the bar-room with their banners
(Fear o' gittin' on 'em spotted), an' a feller could cry quarter
Ef he fired away his ramrod arter tu much rum an' water.
Recollect wut fun we hed, you'n' I an' Ezry Hollis,
Up there to Waltham plain last fall, along o' the Cornwallis? †
This sort o' thing aint *jest* like thet, — I wish that I wuz furdur, — ‡
Nimepunce a day fer killin' folks comes kind o' low fer murder,
(Wy I 've worked out to slarterin' some fer Deacon Cephas Billins,
An' in the hardest times there wuz I ollers tetchted ten shillins,)

* In relation to this expression, I cannot but think that Mr. Biglow has been too hasty in attributing it to me. Though Time be a comparatively innocent personage to swear by, and though Longinus in his discourse *Περί Ύψους* has commended timely oaths as not only a useful but sublime figure of speech, yet I have always kept my lips free from that abomination. *Odi profanum vulgus*, I hate your swearing and hectoring fellows. — H. W.

† i hat the Site of a feller with a muskit as I du pizn But their *is* fun to a cornwallis I aint agoin' to deny it. — H. B.

‡ he means Not quite so fur I guess. — H. B.

There 's sutthin' gits into my throat
 that makes it hard to swaller,
 It comes so nateral to think about a
 hempen collar;
 It 's glory, — but, in spite o' all my try-
 in' to git callous,
 I feel a kind o' in a cart, aridin' to the
 gallus.

But wen it comes to *bein'* killed, — I
 tell ye I felt streaked

The fust time 't ever I found out wy
 baggonets wuz peaked;

Here 's how it wuz: I started out to go
 to a fandango,

The sentinul he ups an' sez, "Thet 's
 furder 'an you can go."

"None o' your sarse," sez I; sez he,
 "Stan' back!" "Aint you a bus-
 ter?"

Sez I, "I 'm up to all thet air, I guess
 I 've ben to muster;

I know wy sentinuls air sot; you aint
 agoin' to eat us;

Caleb haint no monopoly to court the
 seenoreetas;

My folks to hum air full ez good ez
 hisn be, by golly!"

An' so ez I wuz goin' by, not thinkin'
 wut would folly,

The everlastin' cus he stuck his one-
 pronged pitchfork in me

An' made a hole right thru my close ez
 ef I wuz an in'my.

Wal, it beats all how big I felt hooraw-
 in' in ole Funnel

Wen Mister Bolles he gin the sword to
 our Lestenant Cunnle,

(It 's Mister Secondary Bolles,* thet
 writ the prize peace essay;

Thet 's why he did n't list himself along
 o' us, I dessay.)

An' Rantoul, tu, talked pooty loud, but
 don't put *his* foot in it,

Coz human life 's so sacred thet he 's
 principled agin it, —

Though I myself can't rightly see it 's
 any wus achokin' on 'em,

Than puttin' bullets thru their lights, or
 with a bagnet pokin' on 'em;

* the ignerant creeter means Sekketary;
 but he offers stuck to his books like cobbler's
 wax to an ile-stone. — H. B.

How drefle slick he reeled it off (like
 Blitz at our lyceum

Ahaulin' ribbins from his chops so quick
 you skeercely see 'em),

About the Anglo-Saxon race (an' saxons
 would be handy

'To du the buryin' down here upon the
 Rio Grandy),

About our patriotic pas an' our star-
 spangled banner,

Our country's bird alookin' on an' sing-
 in' out hosanner,

An' how he (Mister B. himself) wuz
 happy fer Ameriky, —

I felt, ez sister Patience sez, a leetle
 mite histericky.

I felt, I swon, ez though it wuz a dref-
 fle kind o' privilege

Atrampin' round thru Boston streets
 among the gutter's drivelage;

I act'ly thought it wuz a treat to hear
 a little drummin',

An' it did bonyfidy seem millanyum
 wuz acomin'

Wen all on us got suits (darned like
 them wore in the state prison)

An' every feller felt ez though all Mex-
 ico wuz hisn.*

This 'ere 's about the meanest place a
 skunk could wal diskiver

(Saltillo's Mexican, I b'lieve, fer wut
 we call Salt-river);

The sort o' trash a feller gits to eat
 doos beat all nater,

I 'd give a year's pay fer a smell o' one
 good blue-nose tater;

The country here thet Mister Bolles
 declared to be so charmin'

Throughout is swarmin' with the most
 alarmin' kind o' varmin'.

He talked about delishis frootis, but
 then it wuz a wopper all,

The holl on 't 's mud an' prickly pears,
 with here an' there a chapparral;

* it must be aloud that there 's a streak of
 nater in lovin' sho, but it sartinly is 1 of the
 curusest things in nater to see a rispecktable
 dri goods dealer (deekon off a chutch may-
 by) a rigin' himself out in the Weigh they
 du and struttin' round in the Reign aspinlin'
 his trowsis and makin' wet goods of himself.
 Ef any thin's foolisher and moor dicklus than
 militery gloary it is milishy gloary. — H. B.

You see a feller peekin' out, an', fust
 you know, a lariat
 Is round yourthroat an' youa copse, 'fore
 you can say, "Wut air ye at?" *
 You never see sech darned gret bugs (it
 may not be irrelevant
 To say I've seen a *scarabæus pilularis* † big ez a year old elephant),
 The rigitment come up one day in time
 to stop a red bug
 From runnin' off with Cunnle Wright,
 —'t wuz jest a common *cimex*
lectularius.

One night I started up on eend an'
 thought I wuz to hum agin,
 I heern a horn, thinks I it's Sol the
 fisherman hez come agin,
His bellowses is sound enough, — ez
 I'm a livin' creeter,
 I felt a thing go thru my leg, — 't wuz
 nothin' more 'n a skeeter!
 'Then there 's the yaller fever, tu, they
 call it here el vonito, —
 (Come, thet wun't du, you landcrab
 there, I tell ye to le' *go* my toe!
 My gracious! it's a scorpion thet 's
 took a shine to play with 't,
 I darn't skeer the tarna! thing fer fear
 he 'd run away with 't.)
 Afore I come away from hum I hed a
 strong persuasion
 Thet Mexicans worn't human beans, ‡
 — an ourang outang nation,
 A sort o' folks a chap could kill an'
 never dream on 't arter,
 No more 'n a feller 'd dream o' pigs thet
 he hed hed to slarter;
 I 'd an idee thet they were built arter
 the darkie fashion all,
 An' kickin' colored folks about, you
 know, 's a kind o' national;

* these fellers are verry proppilly called
 Rank Heroes, and the more tha kill the
 ranker and more Herowick tha bekum. —
 H. B.

† it wuz "tumblebug" as he Writ it, but
 the parson put the Latten instd. i sed tother
 maid better meeter, but he said tha was ed-
 dykated peep! to Boston and tha would n't
 stan' it no how. idnow as tha *wood* and id-
 now as tha *wood*. — H. B.

‡ he means human beins, that 's wut he
 means. i spose he kinder thought tha wuz
 human beans ware the Xisle Poles comes
 from. — H. B.

But wen I jined I wornt so wise ez thet
 air queen o' Sheby,
 Fer, come to look at 'em, they aint
 much diff'rent from wut we be,
 An' here we air ascrougin' 'em out o'
 thir own dominions,
 Ashelterin' 'em, ez Caleb sez, under
 our eagle's pinions,
 Wich means to take a feller up jest by
 the slack o' 's trowsis
 An' walk him Spanish clean right out
 o' all his homes an' houses;
 Wal, it doos seem a curus way, but then
 hooraw fer Jackson!
 It must be right, fer Caleb sez it 's reg'
 lar Anglo-saxon.
 The Mex'cans don't fight fair, they say,
 they piz'n all the water,
 An' du amazin' lots o' things thet is n't
 wut they ough' to;
 Bein' they haint no lead, they make
 thir bullets out o' copper
 An' shoot the darned things at us, tu,
 wich Caleb sez aint proper;
 He sez they 'd ough' to stan' right up
 an' let us pop 'em fairly
 (Guess wen he ketches 'em at thet he 'll
 hev to git up airly),
 Thet our nation 's bigger 'n theirn an'
 so its rights air bigger,
 An' thet it 's all to make 'em free thet
 we air pullin' trigger,
 Thet Anglo Saxondom's idee 's abreak-
 in' 'em to pieces,
 An' thet idee 's thet every man doos
 jest wut he damn pleases;
 Ef I don't make his meanin' clear, per-
 haps in some respex I can,
 I know thet "every man" don't mean
 a nigger or a Mexican;
 An' there 's another thing I know, an
 thet is, ef these creeturs,
 Thet stick an Anglosaxon mask onto
 State-prison feturs,
 Should come to Jaalam Centre fer to
 argify an' spout on 't,
 The gals 'ould count the silver spoons
 the minnit they cleared out on 't.

This goin' ware glory waits ye hain'
 one agreeable feetur,
 An' ef it worn't fer wakin' snakes, I 'd
 home agin short meter;
 O, would n't I be off, quick time, ef 't
 worn't thet I wuz sartin

They'd let the daylight into me to pay
me fer desartin !
I don't approve o' tellin' tales, but jest
to you I may state
Our officers aint wut they wuz afore
they left the Bay-state ;
Then it wuz " Mister Sawin, sir, you're
middlin' well now, be ye ?
Step up an' take a nipper, sir ; I'm
dreffle glad to see ye " ;
But now it's " Ware's my eppylet ?
here, Sawin, step an' fetch it !
An' mind your eye, be thund'rin' spry,
or, damn ye, you shall ketch it !"
Wal, ez the Doctor sez, some pork will
bile so, but by mighty,
Ef I hed some on 'em to hum, I'd give
'em linkum vity,
I'd play the rogue's march on their
hides an' other music follerin' —
But I must close my letter here, fer one
on 'em's ahollerin',
'These Anglosaxon officers, — wal, tait
no use ajawin',
I'm safe enlisted fer the war,
Yourn,

BIRDOFREDOM SAWIN.

(Those have not been wanting (as, indeed, when hath Satan been to seek for attorneys ?) who have maintained that our late inroad upon Mexico was undertaken, not so much for the avenging of any national quarrel, as for the spreading of free institutions and of Protestantism. *Capita vix duabus Anticyris medenda!* Verily I admire that no pious sergeant among these new Crusaders beheld Martin Luther riding at the front of the host upon a tamed pontifical bull, as, in that former invasion of Mexico, the zealous Gomara (spawn though he were of the Scarlet Woman) was favored with a vision of St. James of Compostella, skewering the infidels upon his apostolical lance. We read, also, that Richard of the lion heart, having gone to Palestine on a similar errand of mercy, was divinely encouraged to cut the throats of such Paynins as refused to swallow the bread of life (doubtless that they might be thereafter incapacitated for swallowing the filthy goblets of Mahound) by angels of heaven, who cried to the king and his knights, — *Seigneurs, tuez ! tuez !* providentially using the French tongue, as being the only one understood by their auditors. This would argue for the pantoglottism of these celestial intelligences, while, on the other hand, the Devil, *teste* Cotton Mather, is un-

versed in certain of the Indian dialects. Yet must he be a semiologist the most expert, making himself intelligible to every people and kindred by signs ; no other discourse indeed, being needful, than such as the mackerel-fisher holds with his finned quarry, who, if other bait be wanting, can by a bare bit of white rag at the end of a string captivate those foolish fishes. Such piscatorial oratory is Satan cunning in. Before one he trails a hat and feather, or a bare feather without a hat ; before another, a Presidential chair or a tidewater's stool, or a pulpit in the city, no matter what. To us, dangling there over our heads, they seem junkets dropped out of the seventh heaven, sops dipped in nectar, but, once in our mouths, they are all one, bits of fuzzy cotton.

This, however, by the way. It is time now *revocare gradum*. While so many miracles of this sort, vouched by eye-witnesses, have encouraged the arms of Papists, not to speak of Echeleæus at Marathon and those *Dioscuri* (whom we must conclude inns of the pit) who sundry times captained the pagan Roman soldiery, it is strange that our first American crusade was not in some such wise also signalized. Yet it is said that the Lord hath manifestly prospered our armies. This opens the question, whether, when our hands are strengthened to make great slaughter of our enemies, it be absolutely and demonstratively certain that this might is added to us from above, or whether some Potentate from an opposite quarter may not have a finger in it, as there are few pies into which his meddling digits are not thrust. Would the Sanctifier and Setter-apart of the seventh day have assisted in a victory gained on the Sabbath, as was one in the late war ? Or has that day become less an object of his especial care since the year 1697, when so manifest a providence occurred to Mr. William Trowbridge, in answer to whose prayers, when he and all on shipboard with him were starving, a dolphin was sent daily, " which was enough to serve 'em ; only on Saturdays they still caught a couple, and on the *Lord's Days* they could catch none at all ?" Haply they might have been permitted, by way of mortification, to take some few sculpins (those banes of the salt-water angler), which unseeinly fish would, moreover, have conveyed to them a symbolical reproof for their breach of the day, being known in the rude dialect of our mariners as *Cape Cod Clergymen*.

It has been a refreshment to many nice consciences to know that our Chief Magistrate would not regard with eyes of approval the (by many esteemed) sinful pastime of dancing, and I own myself to be so far of that mind, that I could not but set my face against this Mexican Polka, though danced to the Presidential piping with a Gubernatorial second. If ever the country should be seized with another such mania *de propaganda fide*, I think it would be wise to fill

our bombshells with alternate copies of the Cambridge Platform and the Thirty-nine Articles, which would produce a mixture of the highest explosive power, and to wrap every one of our cannon-balls in a leaf of the New Testament, the reading of which is denied to those who sit in the darkness of Popery. Those iron evangelists would thus be able to disseminate vital religion and Gospel truth in quarters inaccessible to the ordinary missionary. I have seen lads, unimpregnate with the more sublimated punctiliousness of Walton, secure pickerel, taking their unwary *siesta* beneath the lily-pads too nigh the surface, with a gun and small shot. Why not, then, since gunpowder was unknown in the time of the Apostles (not to enter here upon the question whether it were discovered before that period by the Chinese), suit our metaphor to the age in which we live, and say *shooters* as well as *fishers* of men?

I do much fear that we shall be seized now and then with a Protestant fervor, as long as we have neighbor Naboths whose wallowings in Papistical mire excite our horror in exact proportion to the size and desirableness of their vineyards. Yet I rejoice that some earnest Protestants have been made by this war, — I mean those who protested against it. Fewer they were than I could wish, for one might imagine America to have been colonized by a tribe of those nondescript African animals the Aye-Ayes, so difficult a word is *No* to us all. There is some malformation or defect of the vocal organs, which either prevents our uttering it at all, or gives it so thick a pronunciation as to be unintelligible. A mouth filled with the national pudding, or watering in expectation thereof, is wholly incompetent to this refractory monosyllable. An abject and herpetic Public Opinion is the Pope, the Anti-Christ, for us to protest against *e corde cordium*. And by what College of Cardinals is this our God's vicar, our binder and looser, elected? Very like, by the sacred conclave of Tag, Rag, and Bobtail, in the gracious atmosphere of the grog-shop. Yet it is of this that we must all be puppets. This thumps the pulpit-cushion, this guides the editor's pen, this wags the senators' tongue. This decides what Scriptures are canonical, and shuffles Christ away into the Apocrypha. According to that sentence fathered upon Solon, *Ὀὐτῶ δημόσιον κακὸν ἐρχεται οἰκὰδ ἑκάστῳ*. This unclean spirit is skilful to assume various shapes. I have known it to enter my own study and nudge my elbow of a Saturday, under the semblance of a wealthy member of my congregation. It were a great blessing, if every particular of what in the sun we call popular sentiment could carry about the name of its manufacturer stamped legibly upon it. I gave a stab under the fifth rib to that pestilent fallacy, — "Our country, right or wrong," — by tracing its original to a

speech of Ensign Cilley at a dinner of the Buntingtown Fencibles. — H. W.†

No. III.

WHAT MR. ROBINSON THINKS.

[A FEW remarks on the following verses will not be out of place. The satire in them was not meant to have any personal, but only a general, application. Of the gentleman upon whose letter they were intended as a commentary Mr. Biglow had never heard, till he saw the letter itself. The position of the satirist is oftentimes one which he would not have chosen, had the election been left to himself. In attacking bad principles, he is obliged to select some individual who has made himself their exponent, and in whom they are impersonate, to the end that what he says may not, through ambiguity, be dissipated *tenues in auras*. For what says Seneca? *Longium iter per precepta, breve et efficace per exempla*. A bad principle is comparatively harmless while it continues to be an abstraction, nor can the general mind comprehend it fully till it is printed in that large type which all men can read at sight, namely, the life and character, the sayings and doings, of particular persons. It is one of the cunningest fetches of Satan, that he never exposes himself directly to our arrows, but, still dodging behind this neighbor or that acquaintance, compels us to wound him through them, if at all. He holds our affections as hostages, the while he patches up a truce with our conscience.

Meanwhile, let us not forget that the aim of the true satirist is not to be severe upon persons, but only upon falsehood, and, as Truth and Falsehood start from the same point, and sometimes even go along together for a little way, his business is to follow the path of the latter after it diverges, and to show her floundering in the bog at the end of it. Truth is quite beyond the reach of satire. There is so brave a simplicity in her, that she can no more be made ridiculous than an oak or a pine. The danger of the satirist is, that continual use may deaden his sensibility to the force of language. He becomes more and more liable to strike harder than he knows or intends. He may be careful to put on his boxing-gloves, and yet forget, that, the older they grow, the more plainly may the knuckles inside be felt. Moreover, in the heat of contest, the eye is insensibly drawn to the crown of victory, whose tawdry tinsel glitters through that dust of the ring which obscures Truth's wreath of simple leaves. I have sometimes thought that my young friend, Mr. Biglow, needed a monitory hand laid on his arm, — *aliquid sufflammandus erit*. I have never

thought it good husbandry to water the tender plants of reform with *aqua fortis*, yet, where so much is to do in the beds, he were a sorry gardener who should wage a whole day's war with an iron scuffle on those ill weeds that make the garden-walks of life unsightly, when a sprinkle of Attic salt will wither them up. *Est ars etiam maledicendi*, says Scaliger, and truly it is a hard thing to say where the graceful gentleness of the lamb merges in downright sheepishness. We may conclude with worthy and wise Dr. Fuller, that "one may be a lamb in private wrongs, but in hearing general affronts to goodness they are asses which are not lions." — H. W.]

GUVENER B. is a sensible man ;
He stays to his home an' looks arter
his folks ;
He draws his furrer ez straight ez he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes ;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

My ! aint it terrible ? Wut shall we du ?
We can't never choose him o' course,
— thet 's flat ;

Guess we shall hev to come round,
(don't you ?)
An' go in fer thunder an' guns, an'
all that ;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez he wunt vote fer Guvener B.

General C. is a drefle smart man :
He 's ben on all sides that give places
or pelf ;

But consistency still wuz a part of his
plan, —
He 's ben true to *one* party, — an'
thet is himself ; —
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer General C.

General C. he goes in fer the war ;
He don't vally principle more 'n an
old cud ;

Wut did God make us raytional cree-
turs fer,
But glory an' gunpowder, plunder an'
blood ?
So John P.
Robinson he
Sez he shall vote fer General C.

We were gittin' on nicely up here to
our village,
With good old idees o' wut 's right
an' wut aint,
We kind o' thought Christ went agin
war an' pillage,
An' thet eppyletts worn't the best
mark of a saint ;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez this kind o' thing 's an ex-
ploded idee.

The side of our country must ollers be
took,
An' President Polk, you know, *he* is
our country.
An' the angel thet writes all our sins in
a book
Puts the *debit* to him, an' to us the
per contry ;
An' John P.
Robinson he
Sez this is his view o' the thing to
a T.

Parson Wilbur he calls all these argi-
munts lies ;
Sez they 're nothin' on airth but jest
fee, faw, fum ;
An' thet all this big talk of our destinies
Is half on it ign'ance, an' t'other half
rum ;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez it aint no sech thing ; an', of
course, so must we.

Parson Wilbur sez *he* never heerd in
his life
Thet th' Apostles rigged out in their
swaller-tail coats,
An' marched round in front of a drum
an' a fife,
To git some on 'em office, an' some
on 'em votes ;
But John P.
Robinson he
Sez they did n't know everythin'
down in Judee.

Wal, it's a marcy we've gut folks to
tell us
The rights an' the wrongs o' these
matters, I vow, —

God sends country lawyers, an' other
wise fellers,
To start the world's team wen it gits
in a slough ;
Fer John P.
Robinson he
Sez the world 'll go right, ef he hollers
out Gee !

[The attentive reader will doubtless have perceived in the foregoing poem an allusion to that pernicious sentiment,—"Our country, right or wrong." It is an abuse of language to call a certain portion of land, much more, certain personages, elevated for the time being to high station, our country. I would not sever nor loosen a single one of those ties by which we are united to the spot of our birth, nor diminish by a tittle the respect due to the Magistrate. I love our own Bay State too well to do the one, and as for the other, I have myself for nigh forty years exercised, however unworthy, the function of Justice of the Peace, having been called thereto by the unsolicited kindness of that most excellent man and upright patriot, Caleb Strong. *Patriæ fumus igne alieno luculentior* is best qualified with this, — *Ubi libertas, ibi patria*. We are inhabitants of two worlds, and owe a double, but not a divided allegiance. In virtue of our clay, this little ball of earth exacts a certain loyalty of us, while, in our capacity as spirits, we are admitted citizens of an invisible and holier fatherland. There is a patriotism of the soul whose claim absolves us from our other and terrene fealty. Our true country is that ideal realm which we represent to ourselves under the names of religion, duty, and the like. Our terrestrial organizations are but far-off approaches to so fair a model, and all they are verily traitors who resist not any attempt to divert them from this their original intendment. When, therefore, one would have us to fling up our caps and shout with the multitude,—"Our country, however bounded!" he demands of us that we sacrifice the larger to the less, the higher to the lower, and that we yield to the imaginary claims of a few acres of soil our duty and privilege as liegemen of Truth. Our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west, by Justice, and when she oversteps that invisible boundary-line by so much as a hair's-breadth, she ceases to be our mother, and chooses rather to be looked upon *quasi nocerca*. That is a hard choice when our earthly love of country calls upon us to tread one path and our duty points us to another. We must make as noble and becoming an election as did Penelope between Icarus and Ulysses. Veiling our faces, we must take silently the hand of Duty to follow her.

Shortly after the publication of the foregoing poem, there appeared some comments

upon it in one of the public prints which seemed to call for animadversion. I accordingly addressed to Mr. Buckingham, of the Boston Courier, the following letter.

JAALAM, November 4, 1847.

"To the Editor of the Courier :

"RESPECTED SIR, — Calling at the post-office this morning, our worthy and efficient postmaster offered for my perusal a paragraph in the Boston Morning Post of the 3d instant, wherein certain effusions of the pastoral muse are attributed to the pen of Mr. James Russell Lowell. For aught I know or can affirm to the contrary, this Mr. Lowell may be a very deserving person and a youth of parts (though I have seen verses of his which I could never rightly understand) ; and if he be such, he, I am certain, as well as I, would be free from any proclivity to appropriate to himself whatever of credit (or discredit) may honestly belong to another. I am confident, that, in penning these few lines, I am only forestalling a disclaimer from that young gentleman, whose silence hitherto, when rumor pointed to himward, has excited in my bosom mingled emotions of sorrow and surprise. Well may my young parishioner, Mr. Biglow, exclaim with the poet,

'Sic vos non vobis,' &c. ;

though, in saying this, I would not convey the impression that he is a proficient in the Latin tongue, — the tongue, I might add, of a Horace and a Tully.

"Mr. B. does not employ his pen, I can safely say, for any lucre of worldly gain, or to be exalted by the carnal plaudits of men, *digito monstrari*, &c. He does not wait upon Providence for mercies, and in his heart mean *merces*. But I should esteem myself as verily deficient in my duty (who am his friend and in some unworthy sort his spiritual *fidus Achates*, &c.), if I did not step forward to claim for him whatever measure of applause might be assigned to him by the judicious.

"If this were a fitting occasion, I might venture here a brief dissertation touching the manner and kind of my young friend's poetry. But I dubitate whether this abstruser sort of speculation (though enlivened by some apposite instances from Aristophanes) would sufficiently interest your oppidan readers. As regards their satirical tone, and their plainness of speech, I will only say, that, in my pastoral experience, I have found that the Arch-Enemy loves nothing better than to be treated as a religious, moral, and intellectual being, and that there is no *apage Sathanas!* so potent as ridicule. But it is a kind of weapon that must have a button of goodness on the point of it.

"The productions of Mr. B. have been stigmatized in some quarters as unpatriotic ; but I can vouch that he loves his native soil

with that hearty, though discriminating, attachment which springs from an intimate social intercourse of many years standing. In the ploughing season, no one has a deeper share in the well-being of the country than he. If Dean Swift were right in saying that he who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before confers a greater benefit on the state than he who taketh a city, Mr. B. might exhibit a fairer claim to the Presidency than General Scott himself. I think that some of those disinterested lovers of the hard-handed democracy, whose fingers have never touched anything rougher than the dollars of our common country, would hesitate to compare palms with him. It would do your heart good, respected Sir, to see that young man mow. He cuts a cleaner and wider swarth than any in this town.

"But it is time for me to be at my Post. It is very clear that my young friend's shot has struck the lintel, for the Post is shaken (Amos ix. 1). The editor of that paper is a strenuous advocate of the Mexican war, and a colonel, as I am given to understand. I presume, that, being necessarily absent in Mexico, he has left his journal in some less judicious hands. At any rate, the Post has been too swift on this occasion. It could hardly have cited a more incontrovertible line from any poem than that which it has selected for animadversion, namely, —

'We kind o' thought Christ went agin war an' pillage.'

"If the Post maintains the converse of this proposition, it can hardly be considered as a safe guide-post for the moral and religious portions of its party, however many other excellent qualities of a post it may be blessed with. There is a sign in London on which is painted, — 'The Green Man.' It would do very well as a portrait of any individual who would support so unscriptural a thesis. As regards the language of the line in question, I am bold to say that He who readeth the hearts of men will not account any dialect unseemly which conveys a sound and pious sentiment. I could wish that such sentiments were more common, however uncouthly expressed. Saint Ambrose affirms, that *veritas a quocunque* (why not, then, *quomodocunque?*) *dicatur, a spiritu sancto est*. Digest also this of Baxter: 'The plainest words are the most profitable oratory in the weightiest matters.'

"When the paragraph in question was shown to Mr. Biglow, the only part of it which seemed to give him any dissatisfaction was that which classed him with the Whig party. He says, that, if resolutions are a nourishing kind of diet, that party must be in a very hearty and flourishing condition; for that they have quietly eaten more good ones of their own baking than he could have conceived to be possible without repletion. He has been for some years past (I regret to say)

an ardent opponent of those sound doctrines of protective policy which form so prominent a portion of the creed of that party. I confess, that, in some discussions which I have had with him on this point in my study, he has displayed a vein of obstinacy which I had not hitherto detected in his composition. He is also (*horresco referens*) infected in no small measure with the peculiar notions of a print called the *Liberator*, whose heresies I take every proper opportunity of combating, and of which, I thank God, I have never read a single line.

"I did not see Mr. B.'s verses until they appeared in print, and there is certainly one thing in them which I consider highly improper. I allude to the personal references to myself by name. To confer notoriety on an humble individual who is laboring quietly in his vocation, and who keeps his cloth as free as he can from the dust of the political arena (though *va mihi si non evangelizavero*), is no doubt an indecorum. The sentiments which he attributes to me I will not deny to be mine. They were embodied, though in a different form, in a discourse preached upon the last day of public fasting, and were acceptable to my entire people (of whatever political views), except the postmaster, who dissented *ex officio*. I observe that you sometimes devote a portion of your paper to a religious summary. I should be well pleased to furnish a copy of my discourse for insertion in this department of your instructive journal. By omitting the advertisements, it might easily be got within the limits of a single number, and I venture to insure you the sale of some scores of copies in this town. I will cheerfully render myself responsible for ten. It might possibly be advantageous to issue it as an *extra*. But perhaps you will not esteem it an object, and I will not press it. My offer does not spring from any weak desire of seeing my name in print; for I can enjoy this satisfaction at any time by turning to the Triennial Catalogue of the University, where it also possesses that added emphasis of Italics with which those of my calling are distinguished.

"I would simply add, that I continue to fit ingenuous youth for college, and that I have two spacious and airy sleeping apartments at this moment unoccupied. *Ingenuas didicisse*, &c. Terms, which vary according to the circumstances of the parents, may be known on application to me by letter, postpaid. In all cases the lad will be expected to fetch his own towels. This rule, Mrs. W. desires me to add, has no exceptions.

"Respectfully, your obedient servant,

"HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

"P. S. Perhaps the last paragraph may look like an attempt to obtain the insertion of my circular gratuitously. If it should appear to you in that light, I desire that you would erase it, or charge for it at the usual

rates, and deduct the amount from the proceeds in your hands from the sale of my discourse, when it shall be printed. My circular is much longer and more explicit, and will be forwarded without charge to any who may desire it. It has been very neatly executed on a letter sheet, by a very deserving printer, who attends upon my ministry, and is a creditable specimen of the typographic art. I have one hung over my mantel-piece in a neat frame, where it makes a beautiful and appropriate ornament, and balances the profile of Mrs. W., cut with her toes by the young lady born without arms.

H. W."

I have in the foregoing letter mentioned General Scott in connection with the Presidency, because I have been given to understand that he has blown to pieces and otherwise caused to be destroyed more Mexicans than any other commander. His claim would therefore be deservedly considered the strongest. Until accurate returns of the Mexicans killed, wounded, and maimed be obtained, it will be difficult to settle these nice points of precedence. Should it prove that any other officer has been more meritorious and destructive than General S., and has thereby rendered himself more worthy of the confidence and support of the conservative portion of our community, I shall cheerfully insert his name, instead of that of General S., in a future edition. It may be thought, likewise, that General S. has invalidated his claims by too much attention to the decencies of apparel, and the habits belonging to a gentleman. These abstruser points of statesmanship are beyond my scope. I wonder not that successful military achievement should attract the admiration of the multitude. Rather do I rejoice with wonder to behold how rapidly this sentiment is losing its hold upon the popular mind. It is related of Thomas Warton, the second of that honored name who held the office of Poetry Professor at Oxford, that, when one wished to find him, being absconded, as was his wont, in some obscure alehouse, he was counselled to traverse the city with a drum and fife, the sound of which inspiring music would be sure to draw the Doctor from his retirement into the street. We are all more or less bitten with this martial insanity. *Nescio qua dulcedine . . . cunctos ducit.* I confess to some infection of that itch myself. When I see a Brigadier-General maintaining his insecure elevation in the saddle under the severe fire of the training-field, and when I remember that some military enthusiasts, through haste, inexperience, or an over-desire to lend reality to those fictitious combats, will sometimes discharge their ramrods, I cannot but admire, while I deplore, the mistaken devotion of those heroic officers. *Semel insanivimus omnes.* I was myself, during the late war with Great Britain, chaplain of a regiment, which was fortunately never called to active

military duty. I mention this circumstance with regret rather than pride. Had I been summoned to actual warfare, I trust that I might have been strengthened to bear myself after the manner of that reverend father in our New England Israel, Dr. Benjamin Colman, who, as we are told in Turell's life of him, when the vessel in which he had taken passage for England was attacked by a French privateer, "fought like a philosopher and a Christian, . . . and prayed all the while he charged and fired." As this note is already long, I shall not here enter upon a discussion of the question, whether Christians may lawfully be soldiers. I think it sufficiently evident, that, during the first two centuries of the Christian era, at least, the two professions were esteemed incompatible. Consult Jortin on this head.—H. W.]

No. IV.

REMARKS OF INCREASE D. O'PHACE, ESQUIRE, AT AN EXTRUMPERY CAUCUS IN STATE STREET, REPORTED BY MR. H. BIGLOW.

[THE ingenious reader will at once understand that no such speech as the following was ever *totidem verbis* pronounced. But there are simpler and less guarded wits, for the satisfying of which such an explanation may be needful. For there are certain invisible lines, which as Truth successively overpasses, she becomes Untruth to one and another of us, as a large river, flowing from one kingdom into another, sometimes takes a new name, albeit the waters undergo no change, how small soever. There is, moreover, a truth of fiction more veracious than the truth of fact, as that of the Poet, which represents to us things and events as they ought to be, rather than servilely copies them as they are imperfectly imaged in the crooked and smoky glass of our mundane affairs. It is this which makes the speech of Antonius, though originally spoken in no wider a forum than the brain of Shakespeare, more historically valuable than that other which Appian has reported, by as much as the understanding of the Englishman was more comprehensive than that of the Alexandrian. Mr. Biglow, in the present instance, has only made use of a license assumed by all the historians of antiquity, who put into the mouths of various characters such words as seem to them most fitting to the occasion and to the speaker. If it be objected that no such oration could ever have been delivered, I answer, that there are few assemblages for speech-making which do not better deserve the title of *Parliamentum Indocorum* than did the

sixth Parliament of Henry the Fourth, and that men still continue to have as much faith in the Oracle of Fools as ever Pantagruel had. Howell, in his letters, recounts a merry tale of a certain ambassador of Queen Elizabeth, who, having written two letters, — one to her Majesty, and the other to his wife, — directed them at cross-purposes, so that the Queen was beducked and bedeaded and requested to send a change of hose, and the wife was beprincessed and otherwise unwontedly besuperlatived, till the one feared for the wits of her ambassador, and the other for those of her husband. In like manner it may be presumed that our speaker has misdirected some of his thoughts, and given to the whole theatre what he would have wished to confide only to a select auditory at the back of the curtain. For it is seldom that we can get any frank utterance from men, who address, for the most part, a Buncombe either in this world or the next. As for their audiences, it may be truly said of our people, that they enjoy one political institution in common with the ancient Athenians: I mean a certain profitless kind of *ostracism*, where-with, nevertheless, they seem hitherto well enough content. For in Presidential elections, and other affairs of the sort, whereas I observe that the *oysters* fall to the lot of comparatively few, the *shells* (such as the privileges of voting as they are told to do by the *ostrivori* aforesaid, and of huzzaing at public meetings) are very liberally distributed among the people, as being their prescriptive and quite sufficient portion.

The occasion of the speech is supposed to be Mr. Palfrey's refusal to vote for the Whig candidate for the Speakership. — H. W.]

No? Hez he? He haint, though?
Wut? Voted agin him?

Ef the bird of our country could ketch
him, she 'd skin him;

I seem 's though I see her, with wrath
in each quill,

Like a chancery lawyer, afin' her bill,
An' grindin' her talents ez sharp ez all
nater,

To pounce like a writ on the back o'
the traitor.

Forgive me, my friends, ef I seem to be
het,

But a crisis like this must with vigor be
met;

Wen an Arnold the star-spangled ban-
ner bestains,

Holl Fourth o' Julys seem to bile in
my veins.

Who ever 'd ha' thought sech a pison-
ous rig

Would be run by a chap thet wuz
chose fer a Wig?

"We knowed wut his principles wuz
'fore we sent him!"

Wut wuz ther in them from this vote to
prevent him?

A marciful Providunce fashioned us
holler

O' purpose thet we might our principles
swaller;

It can hold any quantity on 'em, the
belly can,

An' bring 'em up ready fer use like the
pelican,

Or more like the kangaroo, who (wich
is stranger)

Puts her family into her pouch wen
there 's danger.

Aint principle precious? then, who 's
goin' to use it

Wen there 's resk o' some chap 's gittin'
up to abuse it?

I can't tell the wy on 't, but nothin' is
so sure

Ez thet principle kind o' gits spiled by
exposure; *

A man thet lets all sorts o' folks git a
sight on 't

Ough' to hev it all took right away,
every mite on 't;

Ef he can't keep it all to himself wen
it 's wise to,

He aint one it 's fit to trust nothin' so
nice to.

Besides, ther 's a wonderful power in
latitude

To shift a man's morril relations an'
attitude;

Some flossifiers think thet a fakkilty's
granted

* The speaker is of a different mind from Tully, who, in his recently discovered tractate *De Republica*, tells us, — *Nec vero habere virtutem satis est, quasi artem aliquam, nisi utare*, and from our Milton, who says: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, *not without dust and heat*." — *Areop.* He had taken the words out of the Roman's mouth, without knowing it, and might well exclaim with Austin (if a saint's name may stand sponsor for a curse), *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerint!* — H. W.

The minnit it's proved to be thorough-
 ly wanted,
 Thet a change o' demand makes a
 change o' condition,
 An' thet everythin' 's nothin' except by
 position;
 Ez, fer instance, thet rubber-trees fust
 begun bearin'
 Wen p'litikle consunces come into
 wearin', —
 Thet the fears of a monkey, whose holt
 chanced to fail,
 Drawed the vertibry out to a prehensile
 tail;
 So, wen one 's chose to Congriss, ez
 soon ez he 's in it,
 A collar grows right round his neck in
 a minnit,
 An' sartin it is thet a man cannot be
 strict
 In bein' himself, wen he gits to the
 Deestric,
 Fer a coat thet sets wal here in ole
 Massachusetts,
 Wen it gits on to Washinton, somehow
 askew sets.

 Resolves, do you say, o' the Springfield
 Convention?
 Thet's percisely the pint I was goin' to
 mention;
 Resolves air a thing we most gen'ally
 keep ill,
 They're a cheap kind o' dust fer the
 eyes o' the people;
 A parcel o' delligits jest get together
 An' chat fer a spell o' the crops an' the
 weather,
 Then, comin' to order, they squabble
 awile
 An' let off the speeches they're ferful
 'll spile;
 Then — Resolve, — Thet we wunt hev
 an inch o' slave territory;
 Thet President Polk's holl perceedins
 air very tory;
 Thet the war is a damned war, an'
 them thet enlist in it
 Should hev a cravat with a drefle tight
 twist in it;
 Thet the war is a war fer the spreadin'
 o' slavery;
 Thet our army deserves our best thanks
 fer their bravery;

Thet we're the original friends o' the
 nation,
 All the rest air a paltry an' base fab-
 rication;
 Thet we highly respect Messrs. A, B,
 an' C,
 An' ez deeply despise Messrs. E, F,
 an' G.
 In this way they go to the eend o' the
 chapter,
 An' then they bust out in a kind of a
 raptur
 About their own vartoo, an' folks's
 stone-blindness
 To the men thet 'ould actilly do 'em a
 kindness, —
 The American eagle, — the Pilgrim
 thet landed, —
 Till on ole Plymouth Rock they gi'
 finally stranded.
 Wal, the people they listen and say,
 "Thet's the ticket;
 Ez fer Mexico, 'taint no great glory to
 lick it,
 But 't would be a darned shame to go
 pullin' o' triggers
 To extend the aree of abusin' the nigr-
 gers."

 So they march in percessions, an' gi'
 up hooraws,
 An' tramp thru the mud fer the good o'
 the cause,
 An' think they're a kind o' fulfillin' the
 prophesies,
 Wen they're on'y jest changin' the
 holders of offices,
 Ware A sot afore, B is comf'tably
 seated,
 One humbug's victor'ous an' t'other
 defeated,
 Each honnable doughface gits jest wut
 he axes,
 An' the people — their annoal soft-
 sodder an' taxes.

 Now, to keep unimpaired all these
 glorious feeturs
 Thet characterize morril an' reasonin'
 creeturs,
 Thet give every paytriot all he can cram,
 Thet oust the untrustworthy President
 Flam,
 And stick honest President Sham in
 his place,

To the manifest gain o' the holl human
race,
An' to some indervidgewals on't in
partickler,
Who love Public Opinion an' know
how to tickle her, —
I say thet a party with great aims like
these
Must stick jest ez close ez a hive full o'
bees.

I'm willin' a man should go tollable
strong
Agin wrong in the abstract, fer thet
kind o' wrong
Is ollers unpop'lar an' never gits pitied,
Because it 's a crime no one never com-
mitted ;
But he mus' n't be hard on partickler
sins,
Coz then he 'll be kickin' the people's
own shins ;
On'y look at the Demmercrats, see wut
they 've done
Jest simply by stickin' together like
fun ;
They 've sucked us right into a mis'able
war
Thet no one on airth aint responsible
for ;
They 've run us a hundred cool millions
in debt
(An' fer Demmercrat Horners ther 's
good plums left yet) ;
They talk agin tayriffs, but act fer a
high one,
An' so coax all parties to build up their
Zion ;
To the people they 're ollers ez slick ez
molasses,
An' butter their bread on both sides
with The Masses,
Half o' whom they 've persuaded, by
way of a joke,
Thet Washinton's mantelpiece fell upon
Polk.

Now all o' these blessin's the Wigs
might enjoy,
Ef they 'd gumption enough the right
means to employ ; *

* That was a pithy saying of Persius, and
fits our politicians without a wrinkle. — *Ma-
gister artis, ingeniuque largitor venter.* —
H. W.

Fer the silver spoon, born in Dermoc-
racy's mouth
Is a kind of a scringe thet they hev to
the South ;
Their masters can cuss 'em an' kick
'em an' wale 'em,
An' they notice it less 'an the ass did
to Balaani ;
In this way they screw into second-
rate offices
Wich the slaveholder thinks 'ould sub-
tract too much off his ease ;
The file-leaders, I mean, du, fer they,
by their wiles,
Unlike the old viper, grow fat on their
files.
Wal, the Wigs hev been tryin' to grab
all this prey frum 'em
An' to hook this nice spoon o' good
fortin' away frum 'em,
An' they might ha' succeeded, ez likely
ez not,
In lickin' the Demmercrats all round
the lot,
Ef it warn't thet, wile all faithful Wigs
were their knees on,
Some stuffy old codger would holler
out, — "Treason !
You must keep a sharp eye on a dog
thet hez bit you once,
An' I aint agoin' to cheat my constit-
oounts," —
Wen every fool knows thet a man rep-
resents
Not the fellers thet sent him, but them
on the fence, —
Impartially ready to jump either side
An' make the fust use of a turn o' the
tide, —
The waiters on Providunce here in the
city,
Who compose wut they call a State
Centerl Comitty.
Constitoounts air hendy to help a man
in,
But arterwards don't weigh the heft of
a pin.
Wy, the people can't all live on Uncle
Sam's pus,
So they 've nothin' to du with 't fer
better or wus ;
It's the folks thet air kind o' brought
up to depend on 't
Thet hev any consarn in 't, an' thet is
the end on 't.

Now here wuz New England ahevin'
 the honor
 Of a chance at the Speakership show-
 ered upon her; —
 Do you say, — “She don’t want no
 more Speakers, but fewer;
 She’s hed plenty o’ them, wut she wants
 is a *doer*”?
 Fer the matter o’ thet, it’s notorious in
 town
 Thet her own representatives du her
 quite brown.
 But thet’s nothin’ to du with it; wut
 right hed Palfrey
 To mix himself up with fanatical small
 fry?
 Warn’t we gittin’ on prime with our hot
 an’ cold blowin’,
 Acondemnin’ the war wilst we kep’ it
 agoin’?
 We’d assumed with gret skill a com-
 mandin’ position,
 On this side or thet, no one could n’t
 tell wich one,
 So, wutever side wipped, we ’d a chance
 at the plunder
 An’ could sue fer infringin’ our pay-
 tented thunder;
 We were ready to vote fer whoever wuz
 eligible,
 Ef on all pints at issoo he ’d stay unin-
 telligible.
 Wal, sposin’ we hed to gulp down our
 perfessions,
 We were ready to come out next morn-
 in’ with fresh ones;
 Besides, ef we did, ’t was our business
 alone,
 Fer could n’t we du wut we would with
 our own?
 An’ ef a man can, wen pervisions hev
 riz so,
 Eat up his own words, it’s a marcy it
 is so.

Wy, these chaps frum the North, with
 back-bones to ’em, darn ’em,
 ’Ould be wuth more ’an Gennle Tom
 Thumb is to Barnum:
 Ther’s enough thet to office on this
 very plan grow,
 By exhibitin’ how very small a man can
 grow;

But an M. C. frum here ollers hastens
 to state he
 Belongs to the order called inverte-
 braty,
 Wence some gret filologists judge primy
 fashy
 Thet M. C. is M. T. by paronomashy;
 An’ these few exceptions air *loosus*
naytury
 Folks ’ould put down their quarters to
 stare at, like fury.

It’s no use to open the door o’ success,
 Ef a member can bolt so fer nothin’ or
 less;
 Wy, all o’ them grand constitootional
 pillers
 Our fore-fathers fetched with ’em over
 the billers,
 Them pillers the people so soundly hev
 slep’ on,
 Wile to slav’ry, invasion, an’ debt they
 were swep’ on,
 Wile our Destiny higher an’ higher
 kep’ mountin’
 (Though I guess folks ’ll stare wen she
 hendes her account in),
 Ef members in this way go kicken
 agin’ em,
 They wunt hev so much ez a feather left
 in ’em.

An’, ez fer this Palfrey,* we thought
 wen we ’d gut him in,
 He ’d go kindly in wutever harness we
 put him in;
 Supposin’ we *did* know thet he wuz a
 peace man?
 Doos he think he can be Uncle Sam-
 ple’s policeman,
 An’ wen Sam gits tipsy an’ kicks up a
 riot,
 Lead him off to the lockup to snooze
 till he’s quiet?
 Wy, the war is a war thet true paytriot
 can bear, ef
 It leads to the fat promised land of a
 tayriff;
We don’t go an’ fight it, nor aint to be
 driv on,
 Nor Demmercrats nuther, thet hev wut
 to live on;

* There is truth yet in this of Juvenal, —
 “Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.”
 H. W.

Ef it aint jest the thing thet 's well
pleasin' to God,
It makes us thought highly on else-
where abroad ;
The Rooshian black eagle looks blue
in his eerie
An' shakes both his heads wen he
hears o' Monteery ;
In the Tower Victory sets, all of a
fluster,
An' reads, with locked doors, how we
won Cherry Buster ;
An' old Philip Lewis — thet come an'
kep' school here
Fer the mere sake o' scorin' his ryalist
ruler
On the tenderest part of our kings *in*
fituro —
Hides his crown underneath an old
shut in his bureau,
Breaks off in his brags to a suckle o'
merry kings,
How he often hed hidid young native
Amerrikins,
An' turnin' quite faint in the midst of
his fooleries,
Sneaks down stairs to bolt the front
door o' the Tooleries.*

You say, — “ We 'd ha' scared 'em by
growin' in peace,
A plaguy sight more then by bobberies
like these ” ?

* Jortin is willing to allow of other mira-
cles besides those recorded in Holy Writ,
and why not of other prophecies? It is grant-
ing too much to Satan to suppose him, as
divers of the learned have done, the inspirer
of the ancient oracles. Wiser, I esteem it,
to give chance the credit of the successful
ones. What is said here of Louis Philiope
was verified in some of its minute particulars
within a few months' time. Enough to have
made the fortune of Delphi or Hammon, and
no thanks to Beelzebub neither! That of
Seneca in Medea will suit here : —

“ Rapida fortuna ac levis

Præcepsque regno eripuit, exsilio dedit.”

Let us allow, even to richly deserved mis-
fortune, our commiseration, and be not over-
hasty meanwhile in our censure of the French
people, left for the first time to govern them-
selves, remembering that wise sentence of
Æschylus, —

Ἄπας δὲ τραχὺς ὄστις ἄν νέον κρατῆ.

U. W.

Who is it dares say thet our naytional
eagle
Wun't much longer be classed with the
birds thet air regal,
Coz theirn be hooked beaks, an' she,
arter this slaughter,
'll bring back a bill ten times longer 'n
she ough' to ” ?
Wut's your name? Come, I see ye,
you up-country feller,
You've put me out severil times with
your beller ;
Out with it! Wut? Biglow? I say
nothin' fuder,
Thet feller would like nothin' better 'n
a murder ;
He 's a traiter, blasphemmer, an' wut
ruther worse is,
He puts all his ath'ism in drefle bad
verses ;
Society aint safe till sech monsters air
out on it,
Refer to the Post, ef you hev the least
doubt on it ;
Wy, he goes agin war, agin indirect
taxes,
Agin sellin' wild lands 'cept to settlers
with axes,
Agin holdin' o' slaves, though he knows
it's the corner
Our libbaty rests on, the mis'able
scorner !
In short, he would wholly upset with
his ravages
All thet keeps us above the brute crit-
ters an' savages,
An' pitch into all kinds o' briles an'
confusions
The holl of our civilized, free institu-
tions ;
He writes fer thet ruther unsafe print,
the Courier,
An' likely ez not hez a squintin' to
Foorier ;
I'll be —, thet is, I mean I'll be
blest,
Ef I hark to a word frum so noted a
pest ;
I sha' n't talk with *him*, my religion's
too fervent. —
Good mornin', my friends, I'm your
most humble servant.

[Into the question, whether the ability to
express ourselves in articulate language has

been productive of more good or evil, I shall not here enter at large. The two faculties of speech and of speech-making are wholly diverse in their natures. By the first we make ourselves intelligible, by the last unintelligible, to our fellows. It has not seldom occurred to me (noting how in our national legislature everything runs to talk, as lettuces, if the season or the soil be unpropitious, shoot up lankly to seed, instead of forming handsome heads) that Babel was the first Congress, the earliest mill erected for the manufacture of gabble. In these days, what with Town Meetings, School Committees, Boards (lumber) of one kind and another, Congresses, Parliaments, Diets, Indian Councils, Palavers, and the like, there is scarce a village which has not its factories of this description driven by (milk-and-) water power. I cannot conceive the confusion of tongues to have been the curse of Babel, since I esteem my ignorance of other languages as a kind of Martello-tower, in which I am safe from the furious bombardments of foreign garrulity. For this reason I have ever preferred the study of the dead languages, those primitive formations being Ararats upon whose silent peaks I sit secure and watch this new deluge without fear, though it rain figures (*simulacra*, semblances) of speech forty days and nights together, as it not uncommonly happens. Thus is my coat, as it were, without buttons by which any but a vernacular wild bore can seize me. Is it not possible that the Shakers may intend to convey a quiet reproof and hint, in fastening their outer garments with hooks and eyes?

This reflection concerning Babel, which I find in no Commentary, was first thrown upon my mind when an excellent deacon of my congregation (being infected with the Second Advent delusion) assured me that he had received a first instrument of the gift of tongues as a small earnest of larger possessions in the like kind to follow. For, of a truth, I could not reconcile it with my ideas of the Divine justice and mercy that the single wall which protected people of other languages from the incursions of this otherwise well-meaning propagandist should be broken down.

In reading Congressional debates, I have fancied, that, after the subsidence of those painful buzzings in the brain which result from such exercises, I detected a slender residuum of valuable information. I made the discovery that *nothing* takes longer in the saying than anything else, for *a seculo nihil fit*, so from one polypus *nothing* any number of similar ones may be produced. I would recommend to the attention of *viva voce* debaters and controversialists the admirable example of the monk Copres, who, in the fourth century, stood for half an hour in the midst of a great fire, and thereby silenced a Manichæan antagonist who had less of the salamander in him. As for those who

quarrel in print, I have no concern with them here, since the eyelids are a divinely granted shield against all such. Moreover, I have observed in many modern books that the printed portion is becoming gradually smaller, and the number of blank or fly-leaves (as they are called) greater. Should this fortunate tendency of literature continue, books will grow more valuable from year to year, and the whole Serbonian bog yield to the advances of firm arable land.

The sagacious Lacedæmonians hearing that Tesepon had bragged that he could talk all day long on any given subject made no more ado, but forthwith banished him, whereby they supplied him a topic and at the same time took care that his experiment upon it should be tried out of ear-shot.

I have wondered, in the Representatives' Chamber of our own Commonwealth, to mark how little impression seemed to be produced by that emblematic fish suspended over the heads of the members. Our wiser ancestors, no doubt, hung it there as being the animal which the Pythagoreans revered for its silence, and which certainly in that particular does not so well merit the epithet *cold-blooded*, by which naturalists distinguish it, as certain bipeds, afflicted with ditch-water on the brain, who take occasion to tap themselves in Faneuil Halls, meeting-houses, and other places of public resort. — H. W.]

No. V.

THE DEBATE IN THE SENATE.

SOT TO A NUSRY RHYME.

[The incident which gave rise to the debate satirized in the following verses was the unsuccessful attempt of Drayton and Sayres to give freedom to seventy men and women, fellow-beings and fellow-Christians. Had Tripoli, instead of Washington, been the scene of this undertaking, the unhappy leaders in it would have been as secure of the theoretic as they now are of the practical part of martyrdom. I question whether the Dey of Tripoli is blessed with a District Attorney so benighted as ours at the seat of government. Very fitly is he named Key, who would allow himself to be made the instrument of locking the door of hope against sufferers in such a cause. Not all the waters of the ocean can cleanse the vile smutch of the jailer's fingers from off that little Key. *Athena clavus*, a brazen Key indeed.]

Mr. Calhoun, who is made the chief speaker in this burlesque, seems to think that the light of the nineteenth century is to be put out as soon as he tinkles his little cow-bell curfew. Whenever slavery is touched, he

sets up his scarecrow of dissolving the Union. This may do for the North, but I should conjecture that something more than a pumpkin-tern is required to scare manifest and irremediable Destiny out of her path. Mr. Calhoun cannot let go the apron-string of the Past. The Past is a good nurse, but we must be weaned from her sooner or later, even though, like Plotinus, we should run home from school to ask the breast, after we are tolerably well-grown youths. It will not do for us to hide our faces in her lap, whenever the strange Future holds out her arms and asks us to come to her.

But we are all alike. We have all heard it said, often enough, that little boys must not play with fire; and yet, if the matches be taken away from us, and put out of reach upon the shelf, we must needs get into our little corner, and scowl and stamp and threaten the dire revenge of going to bed without our supper. The world shall stop till we get our dangerous plaything again. Dame Earth, meanwhile, who has more than enough household matters to mind, goes bustling hither and thither as a hiss or a sputter tells her that this or that kettle of hers is boiling over, and before bedtime we are glad to eat our porridge cold, and gulp down our dignity along with it.

Mr. Calhoun has somehow acquired the name of a great statesman, and, if it be great statesmanship to put lance in rest and run a tilt at the Spirit of the Age with the certainty of being next moment hurled neck and heels into the dust amid universal laughter, he deserves the title. He is the Sir Kay of our modern chivalry. He should remember the old Scandinavian mythus. Thor was the strongest of gods, but he could not wrestle with Time, nor so much as lift up a fold of the great snake which knit the universe together; and when he smote the Earth, though with his terrible mallet, it was but as if a leaf had fallen. Yet all the while it seemed to Thor that he had only been wrestling with an old woman, striving to lift a cat, and striking a stupid giant on the head.

And in old times, doubtless, the giants were stupid, and there was no better sport for the Sir Launcelots and Sir Gawains than to go about cutting off their great blundering heads with enchanted swords. But things have wonderfully changed. It is the giants, nowadays, that have the science and the intelligence, while the chivalrous Don Quixotes of Conservatism still lumber themselves with the clumsy armor of a bygone age. On whirls the restless globe through unsounded time with its cities and its silences, its births and funerals, half light, half shade, but never wholly dark, and sure to swing round into the happy morning at last. With an involuntary smile, one sees Mr. Calhoun letting slip his pack-thread cable with a crooked pin at the end of it to anchor South Carolina upon the bank and shoal of the Past. — H. W.]

TO MR. BUCKENAM.

MR. EDITER, As i wuz kinder prunin round, in a little nussry sot out a year or 2 a go, the Dbait in the sennit cum inter my mine An so i took & Sot it to wut I call a nussry rime. I hev made sum onnable Gentlemun speak that dident speak in a Kind uv Poetikul lie sense the season is dreffle backerd up This way

ewers as ushul

HOSEA BIGLOW.

“HERE we stan’ on the Constitution, by thunder!

It’s a fact o’ wich ther’s bushils o’ proofs;

Fer how could we trample on’t so, I wonder,

Ef’t worn’t thet it’s ollers under our hoofs?”

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he;

“Human rights haint no more

Right to come on this floor,

No more’n the man in the moon,” sez he.

“The North haint no kind o’ bisness with nothin’,

An’ you’ve no idee how much bother it sava;

We aint none riled by their frettin’ an’ frothin’,

We’re used to layin’ the string on our slaves,”

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he; —

Sez Mister Foote,

“I should like to shoot

The holl gang, by the gret horn spoon!” sez he.

“Freedom’s Keystone is Slavery, thet ther’s no doubt on,

It’s sutthin’ thet’s — wha’d’ ye call it? — divine, —

An’ the slaves thet we ollers make the most out on

Air them north o’ Mason an’ Dixon’s line,”

Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he; —

“Fer all thet,” sez Mangum,

“T would be better to hang ’em, An’ so git red on ’em soon,” sez he

"The mass ough' to labor an' we lay
on soffies,
Thet 's the reason I want to spread
Freedom's aree ;
It puts all the cunniness on us in office.
An' reelises our Maker's orig'nal
idee,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
"Thet 's ez plain," sez Cass,
"Ez thet some one 's an ass,
It 's ez clear ez the sun is at noon,"
sez he.

"Now don't go to say I'm the friend
of oppression,
But keep all your spare breath fer
coolin' your broth,
Fer I ollers hev strove (at least thet 's
my impression)
To make cussed free with the rights
o' the North,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
"Yes," sez Davis o' Miss.,
"The perfection o' bliss
Is in skinnin' thet same old coon,"
sez he.

"Slavery's a thing that depends on
complexion,
It's God's law thet fetters on black
skins don't chafe ;
Ef brains wuz to settle it (horrid re-
flection !)
Wich of our onnable body'd be
safe ?"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
Sez Mister Hannegan,
Afore he began agin,
"Thet exception is quite opper-
toon," sez he.

"Gen'le Cass, Sir, you needn't be
twitchin' your collar.
Your merit 's quite clear by the dut
on your knees.
At the North we don't make no distinc-
tions o' color ;
You can all take a lick at our shoes
wen you please."
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
Sez Mister Jarnagin,
"They wunt hev to larn agin,
They all on 'em know the old toon,"
sez he.

"The slavery question aint no wavs
bewilderin'.
North an' South hev one int'rest,
it 's plain to a glance ;
No'thern men, like us patriarchs, don't
sell their childrin,
But they *du* sell themselves, ef they
git a good chance,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
Sez Atherton here,
"This is gittin' severe,
I wish I could dive like a loon," sez
he.

"It'll break up the Union, this talk
about freedom,
An' your fact'ry gals (soon ez we
split) 'll make head,
An' gittin' some Miss chief or other to
lead 'em,
'll go to work raisin' promiscuous
Ned,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
"Yes, the North," sez Colquitt,
"Ef we Southeners all quit,
Would go down like a busted bal-
loon," sez he.

"Jest look wut is doin', wut annyky 's
brewin'
In the beautiful clime o' the olive an'
vine,
All the wise aristoxty is tumblin' to ruin,
An' the sankylots drorin' an' drinkin'
their wine,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
"Yes," sez Johnson, "in France
They're beginnin' to dance
Beelzebub's own rigadoon," sez he.

"The South 's safe enough, it don't
feel a mite skeerv.
Our slaves in their darkness an' dut
air tu blest
Not to welcome with proud hallylugers
the ery
Wen our eagle kicks yourn from the
navtional nest,"
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ;—
"O." sez Westcott o' Florida,
"Wut treason is horrider
Then our priv'leges tryin' to
proon?" sez he.

"It's 'coz they 're so happy, thet, wen
 crazy sarpints
 Stick their nose in our bizness, we git
 so darned riled ;
 We think it's our dooty to give pooty
 sharp hints,
 Thet the last crumb of Edin on airth
 sha' n't be spiled,"
 Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he ; —
 "Ah," sez Dixon H. Lewis,
 "It perfectly true is
 Thet slavery's airth's grettest
 boon," sez he.

[It was said of old time, that riches have wings ; and, though this be not applicable in a literal strictness to the wealth of our patriarchal brethren of the South, yet it is clear that their possession ; have legs, and an unaccountable propensity for using them in a northerly direction. I marvel that the grand jury of Washington did not find a true bill against the North Star for aiding and abetting Drayton and Sayres. It would have been quite of a piece with the intelligence displayed by the South on other questions connected with slavery. I think that no ship of state was ever freighted with a more veritable Jonah than this same domestic institution of ours. Mephistopheles himself could not feign so bitterly, so satirically sad a sight as this of three millions of human beings crushed beyond help or hope by this one mighty argument, — *Our fathers knew no better!* Nevertheless, it is the unavoidable destiny of Jonahs to be cast overboard sooner or later. Or shall we try the experiment of hiding our Jonah in a safe place, that none may lay hands on him to make jetsam of him? Let us, then, with equal forethought and wisdom, lish ourselves to the anchor, and await, in pious confidence, the certain result. Perhaps our suspicious passenger is no Jonah after all, being black. For 't is well known that a superintending Providence made a kind of sandwich of Ham and his descendants, to be devoured by the Caucasian race.

In God's name, let all, who hear nearer and nearer the hungry moan of the storm and the growl of the breakers, speak out! But, alas! we have no right to interfere. If a man pluck an apple of mine, he shall be in danger of the justice; but if he steal my brother, I must be silent. Who says this? Our Constitution, consecrated by the callous consuetude of sixty years, and grasped in triumphant argument by the left hand of him whose right hand clutches the clotted slave-whip. Justice, venerable with the undethronable majesty of countless æons, says, — **SPEAK!** The Past, wise with the sorrows and desolations of ages, from amid her shattered fanes and well-housing palaces, ech-

oes, — **SPEAK!** Nature, through her thousand trumpets of freedom, her stars, her sunrises, her seas, her winds, her cataracts, her mountains blue with cloudy pines, blows jubilant encouragement, and cries, — **SPEAK!** From the soul's trembling abysses the still, small voice not vaguely murmurs, — **SPEAK!** But, alas! the Constitution and the Honorable Mr. Bagowind, M. C., say, — **BE DUMB!**
 It occurs to me to suggest, as a topic of inquiry in this connection, whether, on that momentous occasion when the goats and the sheep shall be parted, the Constitution and the Honorable Mr. Bagowind, M. C., will be expected to take their places on the left as our hircine vicars.

*Quid sum miser tunc dicturus?
 Quem patronum rogaturus?*

There is a point where toleration sinks into sheer baseness and poltroonery. The toleration of the worst leads us to look on what is barely better as good enough, and to worship what is only moderately good. Woe to that man, or that nation, to whom mediocrity has become an ideal!

Has our experiment of self-government succeeded, if it barely manage to *rub and go?* Here, now, is a piece of barbarism which Christ and the nineteenth century say shall cease, and which Messrs. Smith, Brown, and others say shall *not* cease. I would by no means deny the eminent respectability of these gentlemen, but I confess, that, in such a wrestling-match, I cannot help having my fears for them.

Discite justitiam, moniti, et non temnere,
 H. W.]

No. VI.

THE PIOUS EDITOR'S CREED.

[AT the special instance of Mr. Biglow, I preface the following satire with an extract from a sermon preached during the past summer, from Ezekiel xxxiv. 2: "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel." Since the Sabbath on which this discourse was delivered, the editor of the "Jaalam Independent Blunderbuss" has unaccountably absented himself from our house of worship.

"I know of no so responsible position as that of the public journalist. The editor of our day bears the same relation to his time that the clerk bore to the age before the invention of printing. Indeed, the position which he holds is that which the clergyman should hold even now. But the clergyman chooses to walk off to the extreme edge of the world, and to throw such seed as he has clear over into that darkness which he calls

the Next Life. As if *next* did not mean *nearest*, and as if any life were nearer than that immediately present one which boils and eddies all around him at the caucus, the ratification meeting, and the polls! Who taught him to exhort men to prepare for eternity, as for some future era of which the present forms no integral part? The furrow which Time is even now turning runs through the Everlasting, and in that must he plant, or nowhere. Yet he would fain believe and teach that we are *going* to have more of eternity than we have now. This *going* of his is like that of the auctioneer, on which *gone* follows before we have made up our minds to bid,—in which manner, not three months back, I lost an excellent copy of Chappelow on Job. So it has come to pass that the preacher, instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic figure at christenings, weddings, and funerals. Or, if he exercise any other function, it is as keeper and feeder of certain theologic dogmas, which, when occasion offers, he unkennels with a *stabby!* 'to bark and bite as 'ti; their nature to,' whence that reproach of *odium theologicum* has arisen.

"Meanwhile, see what a pulpit the editor mounts daily, sometimes with a congregation of fifty thousand within reach of his voice, and never so much as a nodder, even, among them! And from what a Bible can he choose his text,—a Bible which needs no translation, and which no priestcraft can shut and clasp from the laity,—the open volume of the world, upon which, with a pen of sunshine or destroying fire, the inspired Present is even now writing the annals of God! Methinks the editor who should understand his calling, and be equal thereto, would truly deserve that title of *ποιμὴν λαῶν*, which Homer bestows upon princes. He would be the Moses of our nineteenth century; and whereas the old Sinai, silent now, is but a common mountain stared at by the elegant tourist and crawled over by the hammering geologist, he must find his tables of the new law here among factories and cities in this Wilderness of Sin (Numbers xxxiii. 12) called Progress of Civilization, and be the captain of our Exodus into the Canaan of a truer social order.

"Nevertheless, our editor will not come so far within even the shadow of Sinai as Mahomet did, but chooses rather to construe Moses by Joe Smith. He takes up the crook, not that the sheep may be fed, but that he may never want a warm woollen suit and a joint of mutton.

Immemor, O, fidei, pecorumque oblitus tuorum!

For which reason I would derive the name *editor* not so much from *edo*, to publish, as from *edo*, to eat, that being the peculiar profession to which he esteems himself called. He blows up the flames of political discord

for no other occasion than that he may thereby handily boil his own pot. I believe there are two thousand of these mutton-loving shepherds in the United States, and of these, how many have even the dimmest perception of their immense power, and the duties consequent thereon? Here and there, haply, one. Nine hundred and ninety-nine labor to impress upon the people the great principles of *Tweedledum*, and other nine hundred and ninety-nine preach with equal earnestness the gospel according to *Tweedledee*."—H. W.]

I DU believe in Freedom's cause,
Ez fur away ez Payris is;
I love to see her stick her claws
In them infarnal Phayrisees;
It's wal erough agin a king
To dror resolves an' triggers,—
But libbaty's a kind o' thing
Thet don't agree with niggers.

I du believe the people want
A tax on teas an' coffees,
Thet nothin' aint extravgyunt,—
Purvidin' I'm in office;
Fer I hev loved my country sence
My eye-teeth filled their sockets,
An' Uncle Sam I reverence,
Partic'larly his pockets.

I du believe in *any* plan
O' levyin' the taxes,
Ez long ez, like a lumberman,
I git jest wut I axes;
I go free-trade thru thick an' thin,
Because it kind o' rouses
The folks to vote,—an' keeps us in
Our quiet custom-houses.

I du believe it's wise an' good
To sen' out furrin missions,
Thet is, on sartin understood
An' orthydox conditions;—
I mean nine thousan' dolls. per ann.,
Nine thousan' more fer outfit,
An' me to recommend a man
The place 'ould jest about fit.

I du believe in special ways
O' prayin' an' convartin';
The bread comes back in many days
An' buttered, tu, fer sartin;
I mean in preyin' till one busts
On wut the party chooses,
An' in convartin' public trusts
To very privit uses.

I du believe hard coin the stuff
 Fer 'lectioneers to spout on ;
 The people's ollers soft enough
 To make hard money out on ;
 Dear Uncle Sam pervides fer his,
 An' gives a good-sized junk to all,—
 I don't care *how* hard money is,
 Ez long ez mine 's paid punctooal.

I du believe with all my soul
 In the gret Press's freedom,
 To pint the people to the goal
 An' in the traces lead 'em ;
 Palsied the arm that forges yokes
 At my tat contracts squintin',
 An' withered be the nose that pokes
 Inter the gov'ment printin'!

I du believe that I should give
 Wut 's his'n unto Cæsar,
 Fer it 's by him I move an' live,
 Frum him my bread an' cheese air ;
 I du believe that all o' me
 Doth bear his superscription, —
 Will, conscience, honor, honesty,
 An' things o' thet description.

I du believe in prayer an' praise
 To him that hez the grantin'
 O' jobs, — in every thin' thet pays,
 But most of all in CANTIN' ;
 This doth my cup with marcies fill,
 This lays all thought o' sin to rest, —
 I *don't* believe in princerple,
 But O, I *du* in interest.

I du believe in bein' this
 Or thet, ez it may happen
 One way or t'other hendiest is
 To ketch the people nappin' ;
 It aint by princerples nor men
 My preudent course is steadied, —
 I scent wich pays the best, an' then
 Go into it baldheaded.

I du believe thet holdin' slaves
 Comes nat'ral to a President,
 Let 'lone the rowdedow it saves
 To hev a wal-broke precedunt ;
 Fer any office, small or gret,
 I could n't ax with no face,
 Without I 'd ben, thru dry an' wet,
 Th' unrizzest kind o' doughface.

I du believe wutever trash
 'll keep the people in blindness, —
 Thet we the Mexicuns can thrash
 Right inter brotherly kindness,
 Thet bombshells, grape, an' powder
 'n' ball
 Air good-will 's strongest magnets,
 Thet peace, to make it stick at all,
 Must be druv in with bagnets.

In short, I firmly du believe
 In Humbug generally,
 Fer it 's a thing thet I perceive
 To hev a solid vally ;
 This heth my taithful shepherd ben,
 In pasturs sweet heth led me,
 An' this 'll keep the people green
 To feed ez they hev fed me.

[I subjoin here another passage from my before-mentioned discourse.

“Wonderful, to him that has eyes to see it rightly, is the newspaper. To me, for example, sitting on the critical front bench of the pit, in my study here in Jaalam, the advent of my weekly journal is as that of a strolling theatre, or rather of a puppet-show, on whose stage, narrow as it is, the tragedy, comedy, and farce of life are played in little. Behold the whole huge earth sent to me hebdomadally in a brown-paper wrapper!

“Hither, to my obscure corner, by wind or steam, on horseback or dromedary-back, in the pouch of the Indian runner, or clicking over the magnetic wires, troop all the famous performers from the four quarters of the globe. Looked at from a point of criticism, tiny puppets they seem all, as the editor sets up his booth upon my desk and officiates as showman. Now I can truly see how little and transitory is life. The earth appears almost as a drop of vinegar, on which the solar microscope of the imagination must be brought to bear in order to make out anything distinctly. That animalcule there, in the pea-jacket, is Louis Philippe, just landed on the coast of England. That other, in the gray surtout and cocked hat, is Napoleon Bonaparte Smith, assuring France that she need apprehend no interference from him in the present alarming juncture. At that spot, where you seem to see a speck of something in motion, is an immense mass-meeting. Look sharper, and you will see a mite brandishing his mandibles in an excited manner. That is the great Mr. Soandso, defining his position amid tumultuous and irrepressible cheers. That infinitesimal creature, upon whom some score of others, as minute as he, are gazing in open-mouthed admiration, is a famous philosopher, expounding to a select audience their capacity for the Infinite.

That scarce discernible pufflet of smoke and dust is a revolution. That speck there is a reformer, just arranging the lever with which he is to move the world. And lo, there creeps forward the shadow of a skeleton that blows one breath between its grinning teeth, and all our distinguished actors are whisked off the slippery stage into the dark Beyond.

"Yes, the little show-box has its solemn suggestions. Now and then we catch a glimpse of a grim old man, who lays down a scythe and hour-glass in the corner while he shifts the scenes. There, too, in the dim background, a weird shape is ever delving. Sometimes he leans upon his mattock, and gazes, as a coach whirls by, bearing the newly married on their wedding jaunt, or glances carelessly at a babe brought home from christening. Suddenly (for the scene grows larger and larger as we look) a bony hand snatches back a performer in the midst of his part, and him, whom yesterday two infinities (past and future) would not suffice, a handful of dust is enough to cover and silence forever. Nay, we see the same fleshless fingers opening to clutch the showman himself, and guess, not without a shudder, that they are lying in wait for spectator also.

"Think of it: for three dollars a year I buy a season-ticket to this great Globe Theatre, for which God would write the dramas (only that we like farces, spectacles, and the tragedies of Apollyon better), whose scene-shifter is Time, and whose curtain is rung down by Death.

"Such thoughts will occur to me sometimes as I am tearing off the wrapper of my newspaper. Then suddenly that otherwise too often vacant sheet becomes invested for me with a strange kind of awe. Look! deaths and marriages, notices of inventions, discoveries, and books, lists of promotions, of killed, wounded, and missing, news of fires, accidents, of sudden wealth and as sudden poverty;—I hold in my hand the ends of myriad invisible electric conductors, along which tremble the joys, sorrows, wrongs, triumphs, hopes, and despairs of as many men and women everywhere. So that upon that mood of mind which seems to isolate me from mankind as a spectator of their puppet-pranks, another supervenes, in which I feel that I, too, unknown and unheard of, am yet of some import to my fellows. For, through my newspaper here, do not families take pains to send me, an entire stranger, news of a death among them? Are not here two who would have me know of their marriage? And, strangest of all, is not this singular person anxious to have me informed that he has received a fresh supply of Dimitry Bruisgins? But to none of us does the Present continue miraculous (even if for a moment discerned as such). We glance carelessly at the sunrise, and get used to Orion and the Pleiades. The wonder wears off, and to-morrow this sheet, in which a vision was let down to me

from Heaven, shall be the wrappage to a bar of soap or the platter for a beggar's broken victuals."—H. W.]

No. VII.

A LETTER

FROM A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY IN ANSWER TO SUTTIN QUESTIONS PROPOSED BY MR. HOSEA BIGLOW, INCLOSED IN A NOTE FROM MR. BIGLOW TO S. H. GAY, ESQ., EDITOR OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-SLAVERY STANDARD.

[CURIOSITY may be said to be the quality which pre-eminently distinguishes and segregates man from the lower animals. As we trace the scale of animated nature downward, we find this faculty (as it may truly be called) of the mind diminished in the savage, and quite extinct in the brute. The first object which civilized man proposes to himself I take to be the finding out whatsoever he can concerning his neighbors. *Nihil humanum a me alienum puto*; I am curious about even John Smith. The desire next in strength to this (an opposite pole, indeed, of the same magnet) is that of communicating the untelligence we have carefully picked up.

Men in general may be divided into the inquisitive and the communicative. To the first class belong Peeping Toms, eaves-droppers, navel-contemplating Brahmins, metaphysicians, travellers, Empedoclees, spies, the various societies for promoting Rhinotism, Columbases, Yankees, discoverers, and men of science, who present themselves to the mind as so many marks of interrogation wandering up and down the world, or sitting in studies and laboratories. The second class I should again subdivide into four. In the first subdivision I would rank those who have an itch to tell us about themselves, — as keepers of diaries, insignificant persons generally, Montaignes, Horace Walpoles, autobiographers, poets. The second includes those who are anxious to impart information concerning other people, — as historians, barbers, and such. To the third belong those who labor to give us intelligence about nothing at all. — as novelists, political orators, the large majority of authors, preachers, lecturers, and the like. In the fourth come those who are communicative from motives of public benevolence, — as finders of mares'-nests and bringers of ill news. Each of us two-legged fowls without feathers embraces all these subdivisions in himself to a greater or less degree, for none of us se

much as lays an egg, or incubates a chalk one, but straightway the whole barnyard shall know it by our cackle or our cluck. *Omnibus hoc vitium est.* There are different grades in all these classes. One will turn his telescope toward a back-yard, another toward Uranus; one will tell you that he dined with Smith, another that he supped with Plato. In one particular, all men may be considered as belonging to the first grand division, inasmuch as they all seem equally desirous of discovering the mote in their neighbor's eye.

To one or another of these species every human being may safely be referred. I think it beyond a peradventure that Jonah prosecuted some inquiries into the digestive apparatus of whales, and that Noah sealed up a letter in an empty bottle, that news in regard to him might not be wanting in case of the worst. They had else been super or subter human. I conceive, also, that, as there are certain persons who continually peep and pry at the key-hole of that mysterious door through which, sooner or later, we all make our exits, so there are doubtless ghosts fidgeting and fretting on the other side of it, because they have no means of conveying back to this world the scraps of news they have picked up in that. For there is an answer ready somewhere to every question, the great law of *give and take* runs through all nature, and if we see a hook, we may be sure that an eye is waiting for it. I read in every face I meet a standing advertisement of information wanted in regard to A. B., or that the friends of C. D. can hear something to his disadvantage by application to such a one.

It was to gratify the two great passions of asking and answering that epistolary correspondence was first invented. Letters (for by this usurped title epistles are now commonly known) are of several kinds. First, there are those which are not letters at all,—as letters-patent, letters dimissory, letters enclosing bills, letters of administration, Pliny's letters, letters of diplomacy, of Cato, of Mentor, of Lords Lyttelton, Chesterfield, and Orrery, of Jacob Behmen, Seneca (whom St. Jerome includes in his list of sacred writers), letters from abroad, from sons in college to their fathers, letters of marque, and letters generally, which are in no wise letters of mark. Second, are real letters, such as those of Gray, Cowper, Walpole, Howel, Lamb, D. Y., the first letters from children (printed in staggering capitals), Letters from New York, letters of credit, and others, interesting for the sake of the writer or the thing written. I have read also letters from Europe by a gentleman named Pinto, containing some curious gossip, and which I hope to see collected for the benefit of the curious. There are, besides, letters addressed to posterity,—as epitaphs, for example, written for their own monuments by monarchs, whereby we have lately become possessed of the names

of several great conquerors and kings of kings, hitherto unheard of and still unpronounceable, but valuable to the student of the entirely dark ages. The letter which St. Peter sent to King Pepin in the year of grace 755, that of the Virgin to the magistrates of Messina, that of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus to the D—, and that of this last-mentioned active police-magistrate to a nun of Girgenti, I would place in a class by themselves, as also the letters of candidates, concerning which I shall dilate more fully in a note at the end of the following poem. At present, *sat prata biberunt.* Only, concerning the shape of letters, they are all either square or oblong, to which general figures circular letters and round-robins also conform themselves.—H. W.]

DEER SIR its gut to be the fashun now to rite letters to the candid 8s and i was chose at a publick Meetin in Jaalam to du wut was nessary fur that town. i writ to 271 ginerals and gut ansers to 209. tha air called candid 8s but I don't see nothin candid about 'em this here i wich I send wus thought satty's factory. I dunno as it's ushle to print Poscripts, but as all the ansers I got hed the saim, I sposed it wus best. times has gretly changed. Formaly to knock a man into a cocked hat wus to use him up, but now it ony gives him a chance fur the cheef mad-guistracy.—H. B.

DEAR SIR,—You wish to know my notions

On sartin pints thet rile the land ;
There's nothin' thet my natur so shuns
Ez bein' mum or underhand ;
I'm a straight-spoken kind o' creetur
Thet blurts right out wut's in his
head,
An' ef I've one pecooler feetur,
It is a nose thet wunt be led.

So, to begin at the beginnin',
An' come directly to the pint,
I think the country's underpinnin'
Is some consid'ble out o' jint ;
I aint agoin' to try your patience
By tellin' who done this or thet,
I don't make no insinooations,
I jest let on I smell a rat.

Thet is, I mean, it seems to me so,
But, ef the public think I'm wrong

I wunt deny but wut I be so, —
 An', fact, it don't smell very strong ;
 My mind 's tu fair to lose its balance
 An' say wich party hez most sense ;
 There may be folks o' greater talence
 Thet can't set stiddier on the tence.

I'm an eclectic ; ez to choosin'
 'Twixt this an' thet, I'm plaguy
 lawth ;
 I leave a side thet looks like losin',
 But (wile there's doubt) I stick to
 both ;
 I stan' upon the Constitution,
 Ez preudent statesmun say, who've
 planned
 A way to git the most profusion
 O' chances ez to *ware* they'll stand.

Ez fer the war, I go agin it, —
 I mean to say I kind o' du, —
 Thet is, I mean thet, bein' in it,
 The best way wuz to fight it thru ;
 Not but wut abstract war is horrid,
 I sign to thet with all my heart, —
 But civlyzation *doos* git forrid
 Sometimes upon a powder-cart.

About thet darned Proviso matter
 I never hed a grain o' doubt,
 Nor I aint one my sense to scatter
 So'st no one could n't pick it out ;
 My love fer North an' South is equil,
 So I'll jest answer plump an' frank, —
 No matter wut may be the sequil, —
 Yes, Sir, I *am* agin a Bank.

Ez to the answerin' o' questions,
 I'm an off ox at bein' druv,
 Though I aint one thet ary test shuns
 'll give our folks a helpin' shove ;
 Kind o' promiscuous I go it
 Fer the holl country, an' the ground
 I take, ez nigh ez I can show it,
 Is pooty gen'ally all round.

I don't appruve o' givin' pledges ;
 You'd ough' to leave a feller free,
 An' not go knockin' out the wedges
 To ketch his fingers in the tree ;
 Pledges air awfle breachy cattle
 Thet preudent farmers don't turn
 out, —
 Ez long 'z the people git their rattle,
 Wut is there fer 'm to grout about ?

Ez to the slaves, there's no confusion
 In *my* idees consarnin' them, —
 I think they air an Institution,
 A sort o' — yes, jest so, — ahem :
 Do I own any? Of my merit
 On thet pint you yourself may jedge ;
 All is, I never drink no sperit,
 Nor I haint never signed no pledge.

Ez to my princerples, I glory
 In hevin' nothin' o' the sort ;
 I aint a Wig, I aint a Tory,
 I'm jest a candidate, in short ;
 Thet's fair an' square an' perpenticler,
 But, ef the Public cares a fig
 To hev me an' thin' in particler,
 Wy, I'm a kind o' peri-wig.

P. S.

Ez we're a sort o' privateerin',
 O' course, you know, it's sheer an
 sheer,
 An' there is sutthin' wuth your hearin'
 I'll mention in *your* privit ear ;
 Ef you git *me* inside the White House,
 Your head with ile I'll kin' o' 'nint
 By gittin' *you* inside the Light-house
 Down to the eend o' Jaalam Pint.

An' ez the North hez took to Brustlin'
 At bein' scrouged frum off the roost,
 I'll tell ye wut 'll save all tusslin'
 An' give our side a harnsome boost, —
 Tell 'em thet on the Slavery question
 I'm RIGHT, although to speak I'm
 lawth ;
 This gives you a safe pint to rest on,
 An' leaves me frontin' South by
 North.

[And now of epistles candidatal, which are of two kinds, — namely, letters of acceptance, and letters definitive of position. Our republic, on the eve of an election, may safely enough be called a republic of letters. Epistolary composition becomes then an epidemic, which seizes one candidate after another, not seldom cutting short the thread of political life. It has come to such a pass, that a party dreads less the attacks of its opponents than a letter from its candidate. *Litæra scripta manet*, and it will go hard if something bad cannot be made of it. General Harrison, it is well understood, was surrounded, during his candidacy, with the *cordoñ sanitaire* of a vigilance committee. No

prisoner in Spielberg was ever more cautiously deprived of writing materials. The soot was scraped carefully from the chimney-places; outposts of expert rifle-shooters rendered it sure death for any goose (who came clad in feathers) to approach within a certain limited distance of North Bend; and all domestic fowls about the premises were reduced to the condition of Plato's original man. By these precautions the General was saved. *Parva componere magnis*, I remember, that, when party-spirit once ran high among my people, upon occasion of the choice of a new deacon, I, having my preferences, yet not caring too openly to express them, made use of an innocent fraud to bring about that result which I deemed most desirable. My stratagem was no other than the throwing a copy of the Complete Letter-Writer in the way of the candidate whom I wished to defeat. He caught the infection, and addressed a short note to his constituents, in which the opposite party detected so many and so grave improprieties (he had modelled it upon the letter of a young lady accepting a proposal of marriage), that he not only lost his election, but, falling under a suspicion of Sabellianism and I know not what (the widow Endive assured me that he was a Paralipomenon, to her certain knowledge), was forced to leave the town. Thus it is that the letter killet.

The object which candidates propose to themselves in writing is to convey no meaning at all. And here is a quite unsuspected pitfall into which they successively plunge headlong. For it is precisely in such cryptographies that mankind are prone to seek for and find a wonderful amount and variety of significance. *Omne ignotum pro mirifico*. How do we admire at the antique world striving to crack those oracular nuts from Delphi, Hammon, and elsewhere, in only one of which can I so much as surmise that any kernel had ever lodged; that, namely, wherein Apollo confessed that he was mortal. One Didymus is, moreover, related to have written six thousand books on the single subject of grammar, a topic rendered only more tenebrious by the labors of his successors, and which seems still to possess an attraction for authors in proportion as they can make nothing of it. A singular loadstone for theologians, also, is the Beast in the Apocalypse, whereof, in the course of my studies, I have noted two hundred and three several interpretations, each lethaliferous to all the rest. *Non nostrum est tantas componere lites*, yet I have myself ventured upon a two hundred and fourth, which I embodied in a discourse preached on occasion of the demise of the late usurper, Napoleon Bonaparte, and which quieted, in a large measure, the minds of my people. It is true that my views on this important point were ardently controverted by Mr. Shearjashub Holden, the then preceptor of our academy,

and in other particulars a very deserving and sensible young man, though possessing a somewhat limited knowledge of the Greek tongue. But his heresy struck down no deep root, and, he having been lately removed by the hand of Providence, I had the satisfaction of reaffirming my cherished sentiments in a sermon preached upon the Lord's day immediately succeeding his funeral. This might seem like taking an unfair advantage, did I not add that he had made provision in his last will (being celibate) for the publication of a posthumous tractate in support of his own dangerous opinions.

I know of nothing in our modern times which approaches so nearly to the ancient oracle as the letter of a Presidential candidate. Now, among the Greeks, the eating of beans was strictly forbidden to all such as had it in mind to consult those expert amphibologists, and this same prohibition on the part of Pythagoras to his disciples is understood to imply an abstinence from politics, beans having been used as ballots. That other explication, *quod videlicet sensus eo cibo obtundi existimaret*, though supported *pugnans et calcibus* by many of the learned, and not wanting the countenance of Cicero, is confuted by the larger experience of New England. On the whole, I think it safer to apply here the rule of intepretation which now generally obtains in regard to antique cosmogonies, nyths, fables, proverbial expressions, and knotty points generally, which is, to find a common-sense meaning, and then select whatever can be imagined the most opposite thereto. In this way we arrive at the conclusion, that the Greeks objected to the questioning of candidates. And very properly, if, as I conceive, the chief point be not to discover what a person in that position is, or what he will do, but whether he can be elected. *Vos exemplaria Græca nocturna versate manu, versate diurna*.

But, since an imitation of the Greeks in this particular (the asking of questions being one chief privilege of freemen) is hardly to be hoped for, and our candidates will answer, whether they are questioned or not, I would recommend that these ante-electionary dialogues should be carried on by symbols, as were the diplomatic correspondences of the Scythians and Macrobian, or confined to the language of signs, like the famous interview of Panurge and Goatsnose. A candidate might then convey a suitable reply to all committees of inquiry by closing one eye, or by presenting them with a phial of Egyptian darkness to be speculated upon by their respective constituencies. These answers would be susceptible of whatever retrospective construction the exigencies of the political campaign might seem to demand, and the candidate could take his position on either side of the fence with entire consistency. Or, if letters must be written, profitable use might be made of the Dighton rock

hieroglyphic or the cuneiform script, every fresh decipherer of which is enabled to educe a different meaning, whereby a sculptured stone or two supplies us, and will probably continue to supply posterity, with a very vast and various body of authentic history. For even the briefest epistle in the ordinary chirography is dangerous. There is scarce any style so compressed that superfluous words may not be detected in it. A severe critic might curtail that famous brevity of Cæsar's by two thirds, drawing his pen through the supererogatory *veni* and *vidi*. Perhaps, after all, the surest footing of hope is to be found in the rapidly increasing tendency to demand less and less of qualification in candidates. Already have statesmanship, experience, and the possession (nay, the profession, even) of principles been rejected as superfluous, and may not the patriot reasonably hope that the ability to write will follow? At present, there may be death in pot-hooks as well as pots, the loop of a letter may suffice for a bow-string, and all the dreadful heresies of Antislavery may lurk in a flourish. — H. W.]

No. VIII.

A SECOND LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

[IN the following epistle, we behold Mr. Sawin returning, a *miles emeritus*, to the bosom of his family. *Quantum mutatus!* The good Father of us all had doubtless intrusted to the keeping of this child of his certain faculties of a constructive kind. He had put in him a share of that vital force, the nicest economy of every minute atom of which is necessary to the perfect development of Humanity. He had given him a brain and heart, and so had equipped his soul with the two strong wings of knowledge and love, whereby it can mount to hang its nest under the eaves of heaven. And this child, so dowered, he had intrusted to the keeping of his vicar, the State. How stands the account of that stewardship? The State, or Society (call her by what name you will), had taken no manner of thought of him till she saw him swept out into the street, the pitiful leavings of last night's debauch, with cigar-ends, lemon-parings, tobacco-quids, slops, vile stench, and the whole loathsome next-morning of the bar-room, — an own child of the Almighty God! I remember him as he was brought to be christened, a ruddy, rugged babe; and now there he wallows, reeking, seething, — the dead corpse, not of a man, but of a soul, — a putrefying lump, horrible for the life that is in it. Comes the wind of heaven, that good Samaritan, and parts the hair upon his forehead, nor is too nice to kiss those parched, cracked lips; the

morning opens upon him her eyes full of pitying sunshine, the sky yearns down to him, — and there he lies fermenting. O sleep! let me not profane thy holy name by calling thee stertorous unconsciousness a slumber! By and by comes along the State, God's vicar. Does she say, — "My poor, forlorn foster child! Behold here a force which I will make dig and plant and build for me"? Not so, but, — "Here is a recruit ready-made to my hand, a piece of destroying energy lying unprofitably idle." So she claps an ugly gray suit on him, puts a musket in his grasp, and sends him off, with Gubernatorial and other godspeeds, to do duty as a destroyer.

I made one of the crowd at the last Mechanics' Fair, and, with the rest, stood gazing in wonder at a perfect machine, with its soul of fire, its boiler-heart that sent the hot blood pulsing along the iron arteries, and its thews of steel. And while I was admiring the adaptation of means to end, the harmonious involutions of contrivance, and the never-bewildered complexity, I saw a grined and greasy fellow, the imperious engine's lackey and drudge, whose sole office was to let fall, at intervals, a drop or two of oil upon a certain joint. Then my soul said within me, See there a piece of mechanism to which that other you marvel at is but as the rude first effort of a child, — a force which not merely suffices to set a few wheels in motion, but which can send an impulse all through the infinite future, — a contrivance, not for turning out pins, or stitching button-holes, but for making Hamlets and Lears. And yet this thing of iron shall be housed, waited on, guarded from rust and dust, and it shall be a crime but so much as to scratch it with a pin; while the other, with its fire of God in it, shall be buffeted hither and thither, and finally sent carefully a thousand miles to be the target for a Mexican cannon-ball. Unthrifty Mother State! My heart burned within me for pity and indignation, and I renewed this covenant with my own soul, — *In alius mansuetus ero, at, in blasphemis contra Christum, non ita.* — H. W.]

I SPOSE you wonder ware I be; I can't
tell, fer the soul o' me,
Exactly ware I be myself, — meanin' by
thet the holl o' me.
Wen I left hum, I hed two legs, an'
they worn't bad ones neither,
(The scaliest trick they ever played wuz
bringin' on me hither,)
Now one on 'em's I dunno ware; —
they thought I wuz adyin',
An' sawed it off because they said 't wuz
kin' o' mortifyin';
I'm willin' to believe it wuz, an yit I
don't see, nuther,

Wy one should take to feelin' cheap a
 minnit sooner 'n t' other,
 Sence both wuz equilly to blame; but
 things is ez they be;
 It took on so they took it off, an' thet 's
 enough fer me:
 There 's one good thing, though, to be
 said about my wooden new one,—
 The liquor can't git into it ez 't used to
 in the true one;
 So it saves drink; an' then, besides, a
 teller could n't beg
 A gretter blessin' then to hev one ollers
 sober peg;
 It's true a chap's in want o' two fer
 follerin' a drum,
 But all the march I'm up to now is jest
 to Kingdom Come.

I've lost one eye, but thet 's a loss it 's
 easy to supply
 Out o' the glory that I've gut, fer thet
 is all my eye;
 An' one is big enough, I guess, by
 diligently usin' it,
 'To see all I shall ever git by way o' pay
 fer losin' it;
 'Officers, I notice, who git paid fer all
 our thumps an' kickins,
 Du wal by keepin' single eyes arter the
 fattest pickins;
 So, ez the eye 's put fairly out, I'll larn
 to go without it,
 An' not allow *myself* to be no gret put
 out about it.
 Now, le' me see, thet is n't all; I used,
 'fore leavin' Jaalam,
 To count things on my finger-eends,
 but sutthin' seems to ail 'em;
 Ware 's my left hand? O, darn it, yes,
 I recollect wut 's come on 't;
 I haint no left arm but my right, an'
 thet 's gut jest a thumb on 't;
 It aint so hendy ez it wuz to callate a
 sum on 't.
 I've hed some ribs broke,—six (I
 b'lieve),—I haint kep' no ac-
 count on 'em;
 Wen pensions git to be the talk, I'll
 settle the amount on 'em.
 An' now I'm speakin' about ribs, it
 kin' o' brings to mind
 One thet I could n't never break,—the
 one I lef' behind;

Ef you should see her, jest clear out the
 spout o' your invention
 An' pour the longest sweetnin' in about
 an annoal pension,
 An' kin' o' hint (in case, you know, the
 critter should refuse to be
 Consoled) I aint so 'xpensive now to
 keep ez wut I used to be;
 There 's one arm less, ditto one eye,
 an' then the leg thet 's wooden
 Can be took off an' sot away wenever
 ther 's a puddin'.

I spose you think I 'm comin' back ez
 opperlunt ez thunder,
 With shiploads o' gold images an' varus
 sorts o' plunder;
 Wal, 'fore I vullinteeded, I thought this
 country wuz a sort o'
 Canaan, a reg'lar Promised Land flowin'
 with rum an' water,
 Ware propaty growed up like time,
 without no cultivation,
 An' gold wuz dug ez taters be among
 our Yankee nation,
 Ware nateral advantages were pufficly
 amazin',
 Ware every rock there wuz about with
 precious stuns wuz blazin',
 Ware mill-sites filled the country up ez
 thick ez you could cram 'em,
 An' desput rivers run about abeggin'
 folks to dam 'em;
 Then there were meetinhouses, tu,
 chockful o' gold an' silver
 Thet you could take, an' no one could n't
 hand ye in no bill fer;—
 Thet 's wut I thought afore I went,
 thet 's wut them fellers told us
 Thet stayed to hum an' speechified an'
 to the buzzards sold us;
 I thought thet gold mines could be gut
 cheaper than Chiny asters,
 An' see myself acomin' back like sixty
 Jacob Astors;
 But sech idees soon melted down an'
 did n't leave a grease-spot;
 I vow my holl sheer o' the spiles
 would n't come nigh a V spot;
 Although, most anywares we've ben,
 you need n't break no locks,
 Nor run no kin' o' risks, to fill your
 pocket full o' rocks.

I guess I mentioned in my last some o'
 the nateral feetur
 O' this all-fiered buggy hole in th' way
 o' awfle creetur,
 But I fergut to name (new things to
 speak on so abounded)
 How one day you'll most die o' thust,
 an' 'fore the next git drowned.
 The clymit seems to me jest like a tea-
 pot made o' pewter
 Our Prudence hed, that would n't pour
 (all she could du) to suit her ;
 Fust place the leaves 'ould choke the
 spout, so 's not a drop 'ould dreen
 out,
 Then Prude 'ould tip an' tip an' tip,
 till the holl kit bust clean out,
 The kiver-hinge-pin bein' lost, tea-
 leaves an' tea an' kiver
 'ould all come down *kerswash!* ez
 though the dam broke in a river.
 Jest so 't is here; holl months there
 aint a day o' rainy weather,
 An' jest ez th' officers 'ould be alayin'
 heads together
 Ez t' how they'd mix their drink at
 sech a milingtary deopot, —
 'T'ould pour ez though the lid wuz off
 the everlastin' teapot.
 The cons'quence is, thet I shall take,
 wen I 'm allowed to leave here,
 One piece o' propaty along, — an' thet 's
 the shakin' fever ;
 It 's reggilar employment, though, an'
 thet aint thought to harm one,
 Nor 't aint so tiresome ez it wuz with
 t' other leg an' arm on ;
 An' it 's a consolation, tu, although it
 doos n't pay,
 To hev it said you're some gret shakes
 in any kin' o' way.
 'T worn't very long, I tell ye wut, I
 thought o' fortin-makin', —
 One day a reg'lar shiver-de-freeze, an'
 next ez good ez bakin', —
 One day abrilin' in the sand, then
 smoth'rin' in the meshes, —
 Git up all sound, be put to bed a mess
 o' hacks an' smashes.
 But then, thinks I, at any rate there 's
 glory to be hed, —
 Thet 's an investment, arter all, thet
 may n't turn out so bad ;
 But somehow, wen we 'd fit an' licked,
 I ollers found the thanks

Gut kin' o' lodged afore they come ez
 low down ez the ranks ;
 The Gin'rals gut the biggest sheer, the
 Cunnles next, an' so on, —
We never gut a blasted mite o' glory
 ez I know on ;
 An' spose we hed, I wonder how you're
 goin' to contrive its
 Division so 's to give a piece to twenty
 thousand privits ;
 Ef you should multiply by ten the por-
 tion o' the brav'st one,
 You would n't git more 'n half enough
 to speak of on a grave-stun ;
 We git the licks, — we're jest the grist
 thet 's put into War's hoppers ;
 Leftenants is the lowest grade thet
 helps pick up the coppers.
 It may suit folks thet go agin a body
 with a soul in 't,
 An' aint contented with a hide without
 a bagnet hole in 't ;
 But glory is a kin' o' thing *I* sha'n't
 pursue no surder,
 Coz thet 's the off'cers parquisite, —
 yourn 's on'y jest the murder.

Wal, arter I gin glory up, thinks I at
 least there 's one
 Thing in the bills we aint hed yit, an'
 thet 's the GLORIOUS FUN ;
 Ef once we git to Mexico, we fairly
 may persume we
 All day an' night shall revel in the halls
 o' Montezumy.
 I'll tell ye wut *my* revels wuz, an' see
 how you would like 'em ;
We never gut inside the hall : the nigh-
 est ever *I* come
 Wuz stan'in' sentry in the sun (an',
 fact, it *seemed* a cent'ry)
 A ketchin' smells o' biled an' roast thet
 come out thru the entry,
 An' hearin' ez I sweltered thru my
 passes an' repasses,
 A rat-tat-too o' knives an' forks, a
 clinkty-clink o' glasses :
 I can't tell off the bill o' fare the Gin'-
 rals hed inside ;
 All I know is, thet out o' doors a pair
 o' soles wuz fried,
 An' not a hunderd miles away frum
 ware this child wuz posted,
 A Massachusetts citizen wuz baked an'
 biled an' roasted ;

The on'y thing like revellin' thet ever
come to me
Wuz bein' routed out o' sleep by thet
darned revelee.

They say the quarrel 's settled now ; fer
my part I 've some doubt on 't,
'T'll take more fish-skin than folks think
to take the rife clean out on 't ;
At any rate, I 'm so used up I can't do
no more fightin',

The on'y chance thet 's left to me is
politics or writin' ;

Now, ez the people 's gut to hev a mil-
ingtary man,

An' I aint nothin' else jest now, I 've
hit upon a plan ;

The can'idatin' line, you know, 'ould
suit me to a T,

An' ef I lose, 't wunt hurt my ears to
lodge another flea ;

So I 'll set up ez can'idate fer any kin'
o' office,

(I mean fer any thet includes good easy-
cheers an' soffies ;

Fer ez tu runnin' fer a place ware
work 's the time o' day,

You know thet 's wut I never did, —
except the other way ;)

Ef it 's the Presidential cheer fer wich
I 'd better run,

Wut two legs anyhowers about could
keep up with my one ?

There aint no kin' o' quality in can'i-
dates, it 's said,

So useful ez a wooden leg, — except a
wooden head ;

There 's nothin' aint so poppylar — (wy,
it 's a perfect sin

To think wut Mexico hez paid fer Santy
Anny's pin ;) —

Then I haint gut no princerples, an',
sence I wuz knee-high,

I never *did* hev any gret, ez you can
testify ;

I 'm a decided peace-man, tu, an' go
agin the war, —

Fer now the holl on 't 's gone an' past,
wut is there to go *for* ?

Ef, wile you 're 'lectioneerin' round,
some curus chaps should beg

To know my views o' state affairs, jest
answer WOODEN LEG !

Ef they aint settisfied with thet, an' kin'
o' pry an' doubt

An' ax fer sutthin' deffynit, jest say
ONE EYE PUT OUT !

Thet kin' o' talk I guess you 'll find 'll
answer to a charm,

An' wen you 're druv tu nigh the wall,
hol' up my missin' arm ;

Ef they should nose round fer a pledge,
put on a vartuous look

An' tell 'em thet 's percisely wut I
never gin nor — took !

'Then you can call me "Timbertoes,"
— thet 's wut the people likes ;

Sutthin' combinin' morril truth with
phrases sech ez strikes ;

Some say the people 's fond o' this, or
thet, or wut you please, —

I tell ye wut the people want is jest cor-
rect ideas ;

"Old Timbertoes," you see, 's a creed
it 's safe to be quite bold on,

There 's nothin' in 't the other side can
any ways git hold on ;

It 's a good tangible idee, a sutthin' to
embody

Thet valooable class o' men who look
thru brandy-toddy ;

It gives a Party Platform, tu, jest level
with the mind

Of all right-thinkin', honest folks thet
mean to go it blind ;

Then there air other good hooraws to
dror on ez you need 'em,

Sech ez the ONE-EYED SLARTERER, the
BLOODY BIRDOFREDUM ;

Them 's wut takes hold o' folks thet
think, ez well ez o' the masses,

An' makes you sartin o' the aid o' good
men of all classes.

There 's one thing I 'm in doubt about ;
in order to be President,

It 's absolutely ne'ssary to be a South-
ern residunt ;

The Constitution settles thet, an' also
thet a feller

Must own a nigger o' some sort, jet
black, or brown, or yellor.

Now I haint no objections agin par-
ticklar climes,

Nor agin ownin' anythin' (except the
truth sometimes),

But, ez I haint no capital, up there
among ye, maybe,
You might raise funds enough fer me to
buy a low-priced baby,
An' then to suit the No'thern folks,
who feel obleeged to say
'They hate an' cuss the very thing they
vote fer every day,
Say you're assured I go full butt fer
Libbaty's diffusion
An' made the purchis on'y jest to spite
the Institootion;—
But, golly! there's the currier's hoss
upon the pavement pawin'!
I'll be more 'xplicit in my next.
Yourn,
BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

[We have now a tolerably fair chance of estimating how the balance-sheet stands between our returned volunteer and glory. Supposing the entries to be set down on both sides of the account in fractional parts of one hundred, we shall arrive at something like the following result:—

B. SAWIN, Esq., in account with (BLANK) GLORY.	
Cr.	Dr.
By loss of one leg, 20	To one 675th three
“ do. one arm, 15	cheers in Faneuil Hall, . 30
“ do. four fingers, . 5	“ do. do. on
“ do. one eye, 10	occasion of
“ the breaking of	presentation of
six ribs, . 6	sword to Col-
“ having served	onel Wright, 25
under Colonel	“ one suit of
Cushing one	gray clothes
month, . 44	(ingeniouslyun-
	becoming), . 15
	“ musical enter-
	tainments (drum
	and fife six
	months), . . 5
	“ one dinner after
	return, . . . 1
	“ chance of pen-
	sion, . . . 1
	“ privilege of
	drawing long-
	bow during rest
	of natural life, 23
100	100
E. E.	

It would appear that Mr. Sawin found the actual feast curiously the reverse of the bill of fare advertised in Faneuil Hall and other places. His primary object seems to have been the making of his fortune. *Quærenda*

pecunia primum, virtus post nummos. He hoisted sail for Eldorado, and shipwreck'd on Point Tribulation. *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, auri sacra fames?* The speculation has sometimes crossed my mind, in that dreary interval of drought which intervenes between quarterly stipendiary showers, that Providence, by the creation of a money-tree, might have simplified wonderfully the sometimes perplexing problem of human life. We read of bread-trees, the butter for which lies ready-churned in Irish bogs. Milk-trees we are assured of in South America, and stout Sir John Hawkins testifies to water-trees in the Canaries. Boot-trees bear abundantly in Lynn and elsewhere; and I have seen, in the entries of the wealthy, hat-trees with a fair show of fruit. A family-tree I once cultivated myself, and found therefrom but a scanty yield, and that quite tasteless and in-nutritious. Of trees bearing men we are not without examples; as those in the park of Louis the Eleventh of France. Who has forgotten, moreover, that olive-tree, growing in the Athenian's back-garden, with its strange uxorious crop, for the general propagation of which, as of a new and precious variety, the philosopher Diogenes, hitherto uninterested in arboriculture, was so zealous? In the *sylva* of our own Southern States, the females of my family have called my attention to the china-tree. Not to multiply examples, I will barely add to my list the birch-tree, in the smaller branches of which has been implanted so miraculous a virtue for communicating the Latin and Greek languages, and which may well, therefore, be classed among the trees producing necessities of life,—*venerabile donum fatalis virgæ.* That money-trees existed in the golden age there want not prevalent reasons for our believing. For does not the old proverb, when it asserts that money does not grow on every bush, imply *a fortiori* that there were certain bushes which did produce it? Again, there is another ancient saw to the effect that money is the root of all evil. From which two adages it may be safe to infer that the aforesaid species of tree first degenerated into a shrub, then absconded underground, and finally, in our iron age, vanished altogether. In favorable exposures it may be conjectured that a specimen or two survived to a great age, as in the garden of the Hesperides; and, indeed, what else could that tree in the Sixth Æneid have been, with a branch whereof the Trojan hero procured admission to a territory, for the entering of which money is a surer passport than to a certain other more profitable (too) foreign kingdom? Whether these speculations of mine have any force in them, or whether they will not rather, by most readers, be deemed impertinent to the matter in hand, is a question which I leave to the determination of an indulgent posterity. That there were, in more primitive and happier times, shops

where money was sold,—and that, too, on credit and at a bargain,—I take to be matter of demonstration. For what but a dealer in this article was that Æolus who supplied Ulysses with motive power for his fleet in bags? What that Ericus, king of Sweden, who is said to have kept the winds in his cap? what, in more recent times, those Lapland Nornas who traded in favorable breezes? All which will appear the more clearly when we consider, that, even to this day, *raising the wind* is proverbial for raising money, and that brokers and banks were invented by the Venetians at a later period.

And now for the improvement of this digression. I find a parallel to Mr. Sawin's fortune in an adventure of my own. For, shortly after I had first broached to myself the before-stated natural-historical and archæological theories, as I was passing, *hæc negotia penitus mecum revolvens*, through one of the obscure suburbs of our New England metropolis, my eye was attracted by these words upon a sign-board,—CHEAP CASH-STORE. Here was at once the confirmation of my speculations, and the substance of my hopes. Here lingered the fragment of a happier past, or stretched out the first tremulous organic filament of a more fortunate future. Thus glowed the distant Mexico to the eyes of Sawin, as he looked through the dirty pane of the recruiting-office window, or speculated from the summit of that mirage-Pisgah which the imps of the bottle are so cunning in raising up. Already had my Alnaschar-fancy (even during that first half-believing glance) expended in various useful directions the funds to be obtained by pledging the manuscript of a proposed volume of discourses. Already did a clock ornament the tower of the Jaalam meeting-house, a gift appropriately, but modestly, commemorated in the parish and town records, both, for now many years, kept by myself. Already had my son Seneca completed his course at the University. Whether, for the moment, we may not be considered as actually lording it over those Baratarias with the vicerealty of which Hope invests us, and whether we are ever so warmly housed as in our Spanish castles, would afford matter of argument. Enough that I found that sign-board to be no other than a bait to the trap of a decayed grocer. Nevertheless, I bought a pound of dates (getting short weight by reason of immense flights of harpy flies who pursued and lighted upon their prey even in the very scales), which purchase I made, not only with an eye to the little ones at home, but also as a figurative reproof of that too frequent habit of my mind, which, forgetting the due order of chronology, will often persuade me that the happy sceptre of Saturn is stretched over this Astræa-forsoaken nineteenth century.

Having glanced at the ledger of Glory under the title *Sawin, B.*, let us extend our in-

vestigations, and discover if that restrictive volume does not contain some *carp's* more personally interesting to ourselves. I think we should be more economical of our resources, did we thoroughly appreciate the fact, that, whenever Brother Jonathan seems to be thrusting his hand into his own pocket, he is, in fact, picking ours. I confess that the late *muck* which the country has been running has materially changed my views as to the best method of raising revenue. If, by means of direct taxation, the bills for every extraordinary outlay were brought under our immediate eye, so that, like thrifty house-keepers, we could see where and how fast the money was going, we should be less likely to commit extravagances. At present, these things are managed in such a huffer-mugger way, that we know not what we pay for; the poor man is charged as much as the rich; and, while we are saving and scripping at the spigot, the government is drawing oil at the bung. If we could know that a part of the money we expend for tea and coffee goes to buy powder and balls, and that it is Mexican blood which makes the clothes on our backs more costly, it would set some of us athinking. During the present fall, I have often pictured to myself a government official entering my study and handing me the following bill:—

WASHINGTON, Sept. 30, 1848.

REV. HOMER WILBUR to Uncle Samuel,

Dr.

To his share of work done in Mexico on partnership account, sundry jobs, as below.	
" killing, maiming, and wounding about 5,000 Mexicans, . . .	\$2.00
" slaughtering one woman carrying water to wounded,10
" extra work on two different Sabbaths (one bombardment and one assault) whereby the Mexicans were prevented from defiling themselves with the idolatries of high mass, . . .	3.50
" throwing an especially fortunate and Protestant bombshell into the Cathedral at Vera Cruz, whereby several female Papists were slain at the altar,50
" his proportion of cash paid for conquered territory, . . .	1.75
" do. do. for conquering do. . .	1.50
" manuring do. with new superior compost called "American Citizen,"50
" extending the area of freedom and Protestantism,01
" glory,01

\$9.87

Immediate payment is requested.

N. B. Thankful for former favors, U. S. requests a continuance of patronage. Orders executed with neatness and despatch. Terms as low as those of any other contractor for the same kind and style of work.

I can fancy the official answering my look of horror with, — "Yes, Sir, it looks like a high charge, Sir; but in these days slaughtering is slaughtering." Verily, I would that every one understood that it was; for it goes about obtaining money under the false pretence of being glory. For me, I have an imagination which plays me uncomfortable tricks. It happens to me sometimes to see a slaughterer on his way home from his day's work, and forthwith my imagination puts a cocked-hat upon his head and epaulettes upon his shoulders, and sets him up as a candidate for the Presidency. So, also, on a recent public occasion, as the place assigned to the "Reverend Clergy" is just behind that of "Officers of the Army and Navy" in processions, it was my fortune to be seated at the dinner-table over against one of these respectable persons. He was arrayed as (out of his own profession) only kings, court-officers, and footmen are in Europe, and Indians in America. Now what does my over-officious imagination but set to work upon him, strip him of his gay livery, and present him to me coatless, his trowsers thrust into the tops of a pair of boots thick with clotted blood, and a basket on his arm out of which lolled a gore-smear'd axe, thereby destroying my relish for the temporal mercies upon the board before me! — H. W.]

No. IX.

A THIRD LETTER FROM B. SAWIN, ESQ.

[UPON the following letter slender comment will be needful. In what river Seleminus has Mr. Sawin bathed, that he has become so swiftly oblivious of his former loves? From an ardent and (as befits a soldier) confident wooer of that coy bride, the popular favor, we see him subside of a sudden into the (I trust not jilted) Cincinnatus, returning to his plough with a goodly sized branch of willow in his hand; figuratively returning, however, to a figurative plough, and from no profound affection for that honored implement of husbandry (for which, indeed, Mr. Sawin never displayed any decided predilection), but in order to be gracefully summoned therefrom to more congenial labors. It would seem that the character of the ancient Dictator had become part of the recognized stock of our modern political comedy, though, as our term of office extends to a quadrennial length, the parallel is not so minutely exact

as could be desired. It is sufficiently so, however, for purposes of scenic representation. An humble cottage (if built of logs, the better) forms the Arcadian background of the stage. This rustic paradise is labelled Ashland, Jaalam, North Bend, Marshfield, Kinderhook, or Bâton Rouge, as occasion demands. Before the door stands a something with one handle (the other painted in proper perspective), which represents, in happy ideal vagueness, the plough. To this the defeated candidate rushes with delirious joy, welcomed as a father by appropriate groups of happy laborers, or from it the successful one is torn with difficulty, sustained alone by a noble sense of public duty. Only I have observed, that, if the scene be laid at Bâton Rouge or Ashland, the laborers are kept carefully in the background, and are heard to shout from behind the scenes in a singular tone resembling ululation, and accompanied by a sound not unlike vigorous clapping. This, however, may be artistically in keeping with the habits of the rustic population of those localities. The precise connection between agricultural pursuits and statesmanship, I have not been able, after diligent inquiry, to discover. But, that my investigations may not be barren of all fruit, I will mention one curious statistical fact, which I consider thoroughly established, namely, that no real farmer ever attains practically beyond a seat in General Court, however theoretically qualified for more exalted station.

It is probable that some other prospect has been opened to Mr. Sawin, and that he has not made this great sacrifice without some definite understanding in regard to a seat in the cabinet or a foreign mission. It may be supposed that we of Jaalam were not untouched by a feeling of villatic pride in beholding our townsman occupying so large a space in the public eye. And to me, deeply revolving the qualifications necessary to a candidate in these frugal times, those of Mr. S. seemed peculiarly adapted to a successful campaign. The loss of a leg, an arm, an eye, and four fingers, reduced him so nearly to the condition of a *vox et praterea nihil*, that I could think of nothing but the loss of his head by which his chance could have been bettered. But since he has chosen to balk our suffrages, we must content ourselves with what we can get, remembering *lactucas non esse dandas, dum cardui sufficient.* — H. W.]

I SPOSE you recollect that I explained my gennle views
In the last billet that I writ, 'way down
frum Veery Cruze,
Jest arter I'd a kind o' ben spontaneously sot up
To run unanimsously fer the Presidential
cup;

O' course it worn't no wish o' mine,
 't wuz ferfely distressin',
 But poppler enthusiasm gut so almighty
 pressin'
 Thet, though like sixty all along I
 fumed an' fussed an' sorrered,
 There didn't seem no ways to stop
 their bringin' on me forrerd :
 Fact is, they udged the matter so, I
 could n't help admittin'
 The Father o' his Country's shoes no
 feet but nine 'ould fit in,
 Besides the savin' o' the soles fer ages
 to succeed,
 Seein' thet with one wannut foot, a pair
 'd be more 'n I need ;
 An', tell ye wut, them shoes 'll want a
 thund'rin sight o' patchin',
 Ef this 'ere fashion is to last we 've gut
 into o' hatchin'
 A pair o' second Washintons fer every
 new election, —
 Though, furez number one's consarned,
 I don't make no objection.

I wuz agoin' on to say thet wen at fust
 I saw
 The masses would stick to 't I wuz the
 Country's father-'n-law,
 (They would ha' hed it *Father*, but I
 told 'em 't would n't du,
 Coz thet wuz sutthin' of a sort they
 could n't split in tu,
 An' Washinton hed hed the thing laid
 fairly to his door,
 Nor dars n't say 't worn't his 'n, much
 ez sixty year afore,)
 But 't aint no matter ez to thet ; wen I
 wuz nomernated,
 'T worn't natur but wut I should feel
 consid'able elated,
 An' wile the hooraw o' the thing wuz
 kind o' noo an' fresh,
 I thought our ticket would ha' caird the
 country with a resh.

Sence I 've come hum, though, an'
 looked round, I think I seem to
 find
 Strong argimunts ez thick ez fleas to
 make me change my mind ;
 It's clear to any one whose brain aint
 fur gone in a phthisis,
 Thet hail Columby's happy land is goin'
 thru a crisis,

An' 't would n't nowadays du to hev the
 people's mind distracted
 By bein' all to once by sev'ral pop'lar
 names attackted ;
 'T would save holl haycartloads o' fuss
 an' three four months o' jaw,
 Ef some illustrious paytriot should back
 out an' withdraw ;
 So, ez I aint a crooked stick, jest like —
 like ole (I swow,
 I dunno ez I know his name)— I 'll
 go back to my plough.

Wenever an Amerikin distinguished
 politishin
 Begins to try et wut they call definin'
 his posishin,
 Wal, I, fer one, feel sure he aint gut
 nothin' to define ;
 It's so nine cases out o' ten, but jest
 that tenth is mine ;
 And 't aint no more 'n is proper 'n'
 right in sech a sitooation
 To hint the course you think 'll be the
 savin' o' the nation ;
 To funk right out o' p'lit'cal strife aint
 thought to be the thing,
 Without you deacon off the toon you
 want your folks should sing ;
 So I advise the noomrous friends thet 's
 in one boat with me
 To jest up killock, jam right down their
 hellum hard a lee,
 Haul the sheets taut, an', laying out
 upon the Suthun tack,
 Make fer the safest port they can, wich,
 I think, is Ole Zack.

Next thing you 'll want to know, I
 spose, wut argimunts I seem
 To see thet makes me think this ere 'll
 be the strongest team ;
 Fust place, I 've ben consid'ble round
 in bar-rooms an' saloons
 Agethrin' public sentiment, 'mongst
 Demmercrats and Coons,
 An' 't aint ve'y offen thet I meet a chap
 but wut goes in
 Fer Rough an' Ready, fair an' square,
 hufs, taller, horns, an' skin ;
 I don't deny but wut, fer one, ez fur ez
 I could see,
 I did n't like at fust the Pheladelphia
 nomeerne :

I could ha' pinto to a man thet wuz, I
 guess, a peg
 Higher than him, — a soger, tu, an' with
 a wooden leg ;
 But every day with more an' more o'
 'Taylor zeal I 'm burnin',
 Seein' wich way the tide thet sets to
 office is aturnin' ;
 Wy, into Bellers's we notched the votes
 down on three sticks, —
 "T wuz Birdofredum *one*, Cass *aught*,
 an' Taylor *twenty-six*,
 An' bein the on'y canderdate thet wuz
 upon the ground,
 They said 't wuz no more 'n right thet
 I should pay the drinks all round ;
 Ef I 'd expected sech a trick, I would n't
 ha' cut my foot
 By goin' an' votin' fer myself like a con-
 sumed coot ;
 It did n't make no diff'rence, though ;
 I wish I may be cust,
 Ef Bellers wuz n't slim enough to say
 he would n't trust !

Another pint thet influences the minds
 o' sober jedges
 Is thet the Gin'ral hez n't gut tied hand
 an' foot with pledges ;
 He hez n't told ye wut he is, an' so
 there aint no knowin'
 But wut he may turn out to be the best
 there is agoin' ;
 This, at the on'y spot thet pinched, the
 shoe directly eases,
 Coz every one is free to 'xpect percisely
 wut he pleases :
 I want free-trade ; you don't ; the Gin-
 'ral is n't bound to neither ; —
 I vote my way ; you, yourn ; an' both
 air sooted to a T' there.
 Ole Rough an' Ready, tu, 's a Wig, but
 without bein' ultry
 (He 's like a holsome hayinday, thet's
 warm, but is n't sultry ;
 He 's jest wut I should call myself, a
 kin' o' *scratch* ez 't ware,
 Thet aint exacly all a wig nor wholly
 your own hair ;
 I 've ben a Wig three weeks myself,
 jest o' this mod'rate sort,
 An' don't find them an' Demmercrats
 so different ez I thought ;
 They both act pooty much alike, an'
 push an' scrouge an' cus ;

They 're like two pickpockets in league
 fer Uncle Samwell's pus ;
 Each takes a side, an' then they squeeze
 the old man in between 'em,
 'Turn all his pockets wrong side out an'
 quick ez lightnin' clean 'em ;
 To nary one on 'em I 'd trust a secon'-
 handed rail
 No furder off 'an I could sling a bul-
 lock by the tail.

Webster sot matters right in thet air
 Mashfiel' speech o' his'n ; —
 "Taylor," sez he, "aint nary ways the
 one thet I 'd a chizzen,
 Nor he aint fittin' fer the place, an'
 like ez not he aint
 No more 'n a tough ole bullethead, an'
 no gret of a saint ;
 But then," sez he, "obsarve my pint,
 he 's jest ez good to vote fer
 Ez though the greasin' on him worn't
 a thing to hire Choate fer ;
 Aint it ez easy done to drop a ballot in
 a box
 Fer one ez 't is fer t' other, fer the bull-
 dog ez the fox ?"
 It takes a mind like Dannel's, fact, ez
 big ez all ou' doors,
 To find out thet it looks like rain arter
 it fairly pours ;
 I 'gree with him, it aint so dreffle
 troublesome to vote
 Fer Taylor arter all, — it 's jest to go
 an' change your coat ;
 Wen he 's once greased, you 'll swaller
 him an' never know on 't, scurce,
 Unless he scratches, goin' down, with
 them 'ere Gin'ral's spurs.
 I 've ben a votin' Demmercrat, ez reg-
 'lar as a clock,
 But don't find goin' Taylor gives my
 narves no gret 'f a shock ;
 Truth is, the cutest leadin' Wigs, ever
 sence fust they found
 Wich side the bread gut buttered on,
 hev kep' a edgin' round ;
 They kin' o' slipt the planks frum out
 th' ole platform one by one
 An' made it gradooally noo, 'fore folks
 know'd wut wuz done,
 'Till, fur'z I know, there aint an inch
 thet I could lay my han' on,
 But I, or any Demmercrat, feels com-
 ftable to stan' on,

An' ole Wig doctrines act'ly look, their
occ'pants bein' gone,
Lonesome ez staddles on a mash with-
out no hayricks on.

I spose it 's time now I should give my
thoughts upon the plan,
Thet chipped the shell at Buffalo, o'
settin' up ole Van.

I used to vote fer Martin, but, I swan,
I 'm clean disgusted, —
He aint the man thet I can say is fittin'
to be trusted :

He aint half antislav'ry 'nough, nor I
aint sure, ez some be,
He 'd go in fer abolishin' the Deestrick
o' Columby ;

An', now I come to recollect, it kin' o'
makes me sick 'z

A horse, to think o' wut he wuz in
eighteen thirty-six.

An' then, another thing ; — I guess,
though mebbly I am wrong,

This Buff'lo plaster aint agoin' to dror
almighty strong ;

Some folks, I know, hev gut th' idee
thet No'thun dough 'll rise,

Though, 'fore I see it riz an' baked, I
would n't trust my eyes ;

'T will take more emptins, a long chalk,
than this noo party 's gut,

To give sech heavy cakes ez them a
start, I tell ye wut.

But even ef they caird the day, there
would n't be no endurin'

To stan' upon a platform with sech
critters ez Van Buren ; —

An' his son John, tu, I can't think how
thet 'ere chap should dare

To speak ez he doos ; wy, they say he
used to cuss an' swear !

I spose he never read the hymn thet
tells how down the stairs

A feller with long legs wuz throwed
thet would n't say his prayers.

This brings me to another pint : the
leaders o' the party

Aint jest sech men ez I can act along
with free an' hearty ;

They aint not quite respectable, an'
wen a feller's morrils

Don't toe the straightest kin' o' mark,
wy, him an' me jest quarrils.

I went to a free soil meetin' once, an'
wut d'ye think I see ?

A feller was aspoutin' there thet act'ly
come to me,

About two year ago last spring, ez nigh
ez I can jedge,

An' axed me ef I did n't want to sign
the Temprunce pledge !

He 's one o' them that goes about an'
sez you hed n't ough' ter

Drink nothin', mornin', noon, or night,
stronger 'an Taunton water.

There 's one rule I 've ben guided by,
in settlin' how to vote, ollers, —

I take the side thet *is n't* took by them
consarned teetotalers.

Ez fer the niggers, I 've ben South, an'
thet hez changed my mind ;

A lazier, more ongrateful set you could
n't nowers find.

You know I mentioned in my last thet
I should buy a nigger,

Ef I could make a purchase at a pooty
mod'rate figger ;

So, ez there 's nothin' in the world I 'm
fonder of 'an gunnin',

I closed a bargain finally to take a fel-
ler runnin'.

I shou'dered queen's-arm an' stumped
out, an' wen I comet' th' swamp,

'T worn't very long afore I gut upon
the nest o' Pomp ;

I come acrost a kin' o' hut, an', playin'
round the door,

Some little woolly-headed cubs, ez
many 'z six or more.

At fust I thought o' firin', but *think*
twice is safest ollers ;

There aint, thinks I, not one on 'em
but 's wuth his twenty dollars,

Or would be, ef I hed 'em back into a
Christian land, —

How temptin' all on 'em would look
upon an auction-stand !

(Not but wut I hate Slavery in th' ab-
stract, stem to starn, —

I leave it ware our fathers did, a privit
State consarn.)

Soon 'z they see me, they yelled an'
run, but Pomp wuz out ahoein'

A leetle patch o' corn he hed, or else
there aint no knowin'

He would n't ha' took a pop at me ; but
I hed gut the start,

An' wen he looked, I wov he groaned
ez though he 'd broke his heart ;

He done it like a wite man, tu, ez nat'-
 ral ez a pictur,
 The imp'dunt, pis'nous hypocrite ! wuz
 'an a boy constrictur.
 " You can't gum *me*, I tell ye now, an'
 so you need n't try,
 I 'xpect my eye-teeth every mail, so
 jest shet up," sez I.
 " Don't go to actin' ugly now, or else
 I'll jest let strip,
 You 'd best draw kindly, seein' 'z how
 I 've gut ye on the hip ;
 Besides, you darned ole fool, it aint no
 gret of a disaster
 To be benev'lently druv back to a contented
 tasted master,
 Ware you hed Christian priv'ledges you
 don't seem quite aware of,
 Or you 'd ha' never run away from bein'
 well took care of ;
 Ez fer kin' treatment, wy, he wuz so
 fond on ye, he said
 He 'd give a fifty spot right out, to git
 ye, 'live or dead ;
 Wite folks aint sot by half ez much ;
 'member I run away,
 Wen I wuz bound to Cap'n Jakes, to
 Mattysquamscot Bay ;
 Don' know him, likely ? Spose not ;
 wal, the mean ole codger went
 An' offered — wut reward, think ? Wal,
 it worn't no *less* 'n a cent."

Wal, I jest gut 'em into line, an' druv
 'em on afore me,
 The pis'nous brutes, I 'd no idee o' the
 ill-will they bore me ;
 We walked till som'ers about noon, an'
 then it grew so hot
 I thought it best to camp awile, so I
 chose out a spot
 Jest under a magnoly tree, an' there
 right down I sot ;
 Then I unstrapped my wooden leg, coz
 it begun to chafe,
 An' laid it down 'long side o' me, sup-
 posin' all wuz safe ;
 I made my darkies all set down around
 me in a ring,
 An' sot an' kin' o' ciphered up how
 much the lot would bring ;
 But, wile I dranked the peaceful cup of
 a pure heart an' mind

(Mixed with some wiskey, nowan' then),
 Pomp he snaked up behind,
 An' creepin' grad'ly close tu, ez quiet
 ez a mink,
 Jest grabbed my leg, and then pulled
 foot, quicker 'an you could wink,
 An', come to look, they each on 'em
 hed gut behin' a tree,
 An' Pomp poked out the leg a piece,
 jest so ez I could see,
 An' yelled to me to throw away my pis-
 tils an' my gun,
 Or else thet they 'd cair off the leg, an'
 fairly cut an' run.
 I vow I did n't b'lieve there wuz a decent
 alligatur
 Thet hed a heart so destitoot o' com-
 mon human natur ;
 However, ez there worn't no help, I
 finally give in
 An' heft my arms away to git my leg
 safe back agin.
 Pomp gethered all the weapins up, an'
 then he come an' grinned.
 He showed his ivory some, I guess, an'
 sez, " You 're fairly pinned ;
 Jest buckle on your leg agin, an' git
 right up an' come,
 'T wun't du fer fammerly men like me to
 be so long from hum."
 At fust I put my foot right down an'
 swore I would n't budge.
 " Jest ez you choose," sez he, quite
 cool, " either be shot or trudge."
 So this black-hearted monster took an'
 act'ly druv me back
 Along the very feetmarks o' my happy
 mornin' track,
 An' kep' me pris'ner 'bout six months,
 an' worked me, tu, like sin,
 Till I hed gut his corn an' his Carliny
 taters in ;
 He made me larn him readin', tu (al-
 though the crittur saw
 How much it hut my morril sense to
 act agin the law),
 So'st he could read a Bible he 'd gut ;
 an' axed ef I could pint
 The North Star out ; but there I put
 his nose some out o' jint,
 Fer I weeled round 'bout sou'west, an',
 lookin' up a bit,
 Picked out a middlin' shiny one an' tole
 him thet wuz it.

Fin'ly, he took me to the door, an',
 givin' me a kick,
 Sez, — "Ef you know wut's best fer
 ye, be off, now, double-quick;
 The winter-time's a comin' on, an',
 though I gut ye cheap,
 You're so darned lazy, I don't think
 you're hardly wuth your keep;
 Besides, the childrin's growin' up, an'
 you aint jest the model
 I'd like to hev 'em immertate, an' so
 you'd better toddle!"

Now is there anythin' on airth 'll ever
 prove to me

Thet renegader slaves like him air fit
 fer bein' free?

'U' you think they 'll suck me in to jine
 the Buff'lo chaps, an' them

Rank infidels thet go agin the Scrip-
 tur'l cus o' Shem?

Not by a jugfull! sooner'n thet, I'd
 go thru fire an' water;

Wen I hev once made up my mind, a
 meet'nhus aint sotter;

No, not though all the crows thet flies
 pick my bones wuz cawin', —

I guess we're in a Christian land, —
 Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

[Here, patient reader, we take leave of
 each other, I trust with some mutual satis-
 faction. I say *patient*, for I love not that
 kind which skims dippingly over the surface
 of the page, as swallows over a pool before
 rain. By such no pearls shall be gathered.
 But if no pearls there be (as, indeed, the
 world is not without example of books where-
 from the longest-winded diver shall bring up
 no more than his proper handful of mud), yet
 let us hope that an oyster or two may reward
 adequate perseverance. If neither pearls nor
 oysters, yet is patience itself a gem worth
 diving deeply for.

It may seem to some that too much space
 has been usurped by my own private lucu-
 brations, and some may be fain to bring
 against me that old jest of him who preached
 all his hearers out of the meeting-house save
 only the sexton who, remaining for yet a little
 space, from a sense of official duty, at last
 gave out also, and, presenting the keys,
 humbly requested our preacher to lock the
 doors, when he should have wholly relieved
 himself of his testimony. I confess to a satisfac-
 tion in the self act of preaching, nor do I
 esteem a discourse to be wholly thrown away
 even upon a sleeping or unintelligent audi-
 tory. I cannot easily believe that the Gos-

pel of Saint John, which Jacques Cartier or-
 dered to be read in the Latin tongue to the
 Canadian savages, upon his first meeting with
 them, fell altogether upon stony ground. For
 the earnestness of the preacher is a sermon
 appreciable by dullest intellects and most
 alien ears. In this wise did Episcopus convert
 many to his opinions, who yet understood
 not the language in which he discoursed.
 The chief thing is that the messenger believe
 that he has an authentic message to deli-
 ver. For counterfeit messengers that mode
 of treatment which Father John de Plano
 Carpini relates to have prevailed among the
 Tartars would seem effectual, and, perhaps,
 deserved enough. For my own part, I may
 lay claim to so much of the spirit of martyr-
 dom as would have led me to go into banish-
 ment with those clergymen whom Alphonso
 the Sixth of Portugal drove out of his king-
 dom for refusing to shorten their pulpit elo-
 quence. It is possible, that, having been in-
 vited into my brother Biglow's desk, I may
 have been too little scrupulous in using it for
 the venting of my own peculiar doctrines to a
 congregation drawn together in the expecta-
 tion and with the desire of hearing him.

I am not wholly unconscious of a peculiar-
 ity of mental organization which impels me,
 like the railroad-engine with its train of cars,
 to run backward for a short distance in or-
 der to obtain a fairer start. I may compare
 myself to one fishing from the rocks when the
 sea runs high, who, misinterpreting the suc-
 tion of the undertow for the biting of some
 larger fish, jerks suddenly, and finds that he
 has *caught bottom*, hauling in upon the end
 of his line a trail of various *algæ*, among
 which, nevertheless, the naturalist may haply
 find somewhat to repay the disappointment
 of the angler. Yet have I conscientiously
 endeavored to adapt myself to the impatient
 temper of the age, daily degenerating more
 and more from the high standard of our
 pristine New England. To the catalogue of
 lost arts I would mournfully add also that of
 listening to two-hour sermons. Surely we
 have been abridged into a race of pygmies.
 For, truly, in those of the old discourses yet
 subsisting to us in print, the endless spinal
 column of divisions and subdivisions can be
 likened to nothing so exactly as to the ver-
 tebræ of the saurians, whence the theorist
 may conjecture a race of Anakim proportion-
 ate to the withstanding of these other mon-
 sters. I say Anakim rather than Nephelim,
 because there seem reasons for supposing
 that the race of those whose heads (though
 no giants) are constantly enveloped in clouds
 (which that name imports) will never become
 extinct. The attempt to vanquish the innum-
 erable *heads* of one of those aforemen-
 tioned discourses may supply us with a plausi-
 ble interpretation of the second labor of
 Hercules, and his successful experiment with
 fire affords us a useful precedent.

But while I lament the degeneracy of the

age in this regard, I cannot refuse to succumb to its influence. Looking out through my study-window, I see Mr. Biglow at a distance busy in gathering his Baldwins, of which, to judge by the number of barrels lying about under the trees, his crop is more abun-

dant than my own,—by which sight I am admonished to turn to those orchards of the mind wherein my labors may be more prospered, and apply myself diligently to the preparation of my next Sabbath's discourse. —H. W.]

MELIBŒUS-HIPPONAX.

THE

Biglow Papers,

SECOND SERIES.

-Ἔστιν ἄρ' ὁ ἰδιωτισμὸς ἐνίοτε τοῦ κόσμου παραπολὺ ἐμφανιστικώτερον.

LONGINUS.

“ J'aimerois mieulx que mon fils apprint aux tavernes à parler, qu'aux escholes de la parlerie.”

MONTAIGNE.

„ Unser Sprach ist auch ein Sprach und kan so wohl ein Sack nennen als die Latiner saccus.“

FISCHART.

“ Vim rebus aliquando ipsa verborum humilitas affert.”

QUINTILIANUS.

“ O ma lengo,
Plantarèy une estèlo à toun froun encrumit !”

JASMIN.

TO

E. R. HOAR.

“Multos enim, quibus loquendi ratio non desit, invenias, quos curiose potius loqui dixeris quam Latine; quomodo et illa Attica anus Theophrastum, hominem alioqui disertissimum, annotata unius affectatione verbi, hospitem dixit, nec alio se id deprehendisse interrogata respondit, quam quod nimium Attice loqueretur.”

QUINTILIANUS.

“Et Anglice sermonicari solebat populo, se⁷ secundum linguam Norfolchie ubi natus et nutritus erat.”

CRONICA JOCELINI.

“La politique est une pierre attachée au cou de la littérature, et qui, en moins de six mois la submerge. . . . Cette politique va offenser mortellement une moitié des lecteurs, et ennuyer l'autre qui l'a trouvée bien autrement spéciale et énergique dans le journal du matin.”

HENRI BEYLE.

INTRODUCTION.

THOUGH prefaces seem of late to have fallen under some reproach, they have at least this advantage, that they set us again on the feet of our personal consciousness and rescue us from the gregarious mock-modesty or cowardice of that *we* which shrills feebly throughout modern literature like the shrieking of mice in the walls of a house that has past its prime. Having a few words to say to the many friends whom the "Biglow Papers" have won me, I shall accordingly take the freedom of the first person singular of the personal pronoun. Let each of the good-natured unknown who have cheered me by the written communication of their sympathy look upon this Introduction as a private letter to himself.

When, more than twenty years ago, I wrote the first of the series, I had no definite plan and no intention of ever writing another. Thinking the Mexican war, as I think it still, a national crime committed in behoof of Slavery, our common sin, and wishing to put the feeling of those who thought as I did in a way that would tell, I imagined to myself such an upcountry man as I had often seen at antislavery gatherings, capable of district-school English, but always instinctively falling back into the natural stronghold of his homely dialect when heated to the point of self-forgetfulness. When I began to carry out my conception and to write in my assumed character, I found myself in a strait between two perils. On the one hand, I was in danger of being carried beyond the limit of my own opinions, or at least of that temper with which every man should speak his mind in print, and on the other I feared the risk of seeming to vulgarize a deep and

sacred conviction. I needed on occasion to rise above the level of mere *patois*, and for this purpose conceived the Reverend Mr. Wilbur, who should express the more cautious element of the New England character and its pedantry, as Mr. Biglow should serve for its homely common-sense vivified and heated by conscience. The parson was to be the complement rather than the antithesis of his parishioner, and I felt or fancied a certain humorous element in the real identity of the two under a seeming incongruity. Mr. Wilbur's fondness for scraps of Latin, though drawn from the life, I adopted deliberately to heighten the contrast. Finding soon after that I needed some one as a mouthpiece of the mere drolery, for I conceive that true humor is never divorced from moral conviction, I invented Mr. Sawin for the clown of my little puppet-show. I meant to embody in him that half-conscious immorality which I had noticed as the recoil in gross natures from a puritanism that still strove to keep in its creed the intense savor which had long gone out of its faith and life. In the three I thought I should find room enough to express, as it was my plan to do, the popular feeling and opinion of the time. For the names of two of my characters, since I have received some remonstrances from very worthy persons who happened to bear them, I would say that they were purely fortuitous, probably mere unconscious memories of signboards or directories. Mr. Sawin's sprang from the accident of a rhyme at the end of his first epistle, and I purposely christened him by the impossible surname of Birdofredum not more to stigmatize him as the incarnation of

"Manifest Destiny," in other words, of national recklessness as to right and wrong, than to avoid the chance of wounding any private sensitiveness.

The success of my experiment soon began not only to astonish me, but to make me feel the responsibility of knowing that I held in my hand a weapon instead of the mere fencing-stick I had supposed. Very far from being a popular author under my own name, so far, indeed, as to be almost unread, I found the verses of my pseudonym copied everywhere; I saw them pinned up in workshops; I heard them quoted and their authorship debated; I once even, when rumor had at length caught up my name in one of its eddies, had the satisfaction of overhearing it demonstrated, in the pauses of a concert, that I was utterly incompetent to have written anything of the kind. I had read too much not to know the utter worthlessness of contemporary reputation, especially as regards satire, but I knew also that by giving a certain amount of influence it also had its worth, if that influence were used on the right side. I had learned, too, that the first requisite of good writing is to have an earnest and definite purpose, whether æsthetic or moral, and that even good writing, to please long, must have more than an average amount either of imagination or common-sense. The first of these falls to the lot of scarcely one in several generations; the last is within the reach of many in every one that passes; and of this an author may fairly hope to become in part the mouthpiece. If I put on the cap and bells and made myself one of the court-fools of King Demos, it was less to make his majesty laugh than to win a passage to his royal ears for certain serious things which I had deeply at heart. I say this because there is no imputation that could be more galling to any man's self-respect than that of being a mere jester. I endeavored, by generalizing my satire, to give it what value I could beyond the passing moment and the immediate application. How far I have succeeded I cannot

tell, but I have had better luck than I ever looked for in seeing my verses survive to pass beyond their nonage.

In choosing the Yankee dialect, I did not act without forethought. It had long seemed to me that the great vice of American writing and speaking was a studied want of simplicity, that we were in danger of coming to look on our mother-tongue as a dead language, to be sought in the grammar and dictionary rather than in the heart, and that our only chance of escape was by seeking it at its living sources among those who were, as Scottowe says of Major-General Gibbons, "divinely illiterate." President Lincoln, the only really great public man whom these latter days have seen, was great also in this, that he was master — witness his speech at Gettysburg — of a truly masculine English, classic because it was of no special period, and level at once to the highest and lowest of his countrymen. But whoever should read the debates in Congress might fancy himself present at a meeting of the city council of some city of Southern Gaul in the decline of the Empire, where barbarians with a Latin varnish emulated each other in being more than Ciceronian. Whether it be want of culture, for the highest outcome of that is simplicity, or for whatever reason, it is certain that very few American writers or speakers wield their native language with the directness, precision, and force that are common as the day in the mother country. We use it like Scotsmen, not as if it belonged to us, but as if we wished to prove that we belong to it, by showing our intimacy with its written rather than with its spoken dialect. And yet all the while our popular idiom is racy with life and vigor and originality, bucksome (as Milton used the word) to our new occasions, and proves itself no mere graft by sending up new suckers from the old root in spite of us. It is only from its roots in the living generations of men that a language can be reinforced with fresh vigor for its needs; what may be called a literate dialect grows ever more and more pe-

dantic and foreign, till it becomes at last as unfitting a vehicle for living thought as monkish Latin. That we should all be made to talk like books is the danger with which we are threatened by the Universal Schoolmaster, who does his best to enslave the minds and memories of his victims to what he esteems the best models of English composition, that is to say, to the writers whose style is faultily correct and has no blood-warmth in it. No language after it has faded into *diction*, none that cannot suck up the feeding juices secreted for it in the rich mother-earth of common folk, can bring forth a sound and lusty book. True vigor and heartiness of phrase do not pass from page to page, but from man to man, where the brain is kindled and the lips supplied by downright living interests and by passion in its very throes. Language is the soil of thought, and our own especially is a rich leaf-mould, the slow deposit of ages, the shed foliage of feeling, fancy, and imagination, which has suffered an earth-

change, that the vocal forest, as Howell called it, may clothe itself anew with living green. There is death in the dictionary; and, where language is too strictly limited by convention, the ground for expression to grow in is limited also; and we get a *potted* literature, Chinese dwarfs instead of healthy trees.

But while the schoolmaster has been busystarching our language and smoothing it flat with the mangle of a supposed classical authority, the newspaper reporter has been doing even more harm by stretching and swelling it to suit his occasions. A dozen years ago I began a list, which I have added to from time to time, of some of the changes which may be fairly laid at his door. I give a few of them as showing their tendency, all the more dangerous that their effect, like that of some poisons, is insensibly cumulative, and that they are sure at last of effect among a people whose chief reading is the daily paper. I give in two columns the old style and its modern equivalent.

Old Style.

Was hanged.
When the halter was put round his neck.

A great crowd came to see.
Great fire.
The fire spread.

House burned.
The fire was got under.

Man fell.
A horse and wagon ran against.

The frightened horse.
Sent for the doctor.

The mayor of the city in a short speech welcomed.

I shall say a few words.

Began his answer.
A bystander advised.

New Style.

Was launched into eternity.
When the fatal noose was adjusted about the neck of the unfortunate victim of his own unbridled passions.

A vast concourse was assembled to witness.
Disastrous conflagration.
The conflagration extended its devastating career.
Edifice consumed.
The progress of the devouring element was arrested.

Individual was precipitated.
A valuable horse attached to a vehicle driven by J. S., in the employment of J. B., collided with.

The infuriated animal.
Called into requisition the services of the family physician.

The chief magistrate of the metropolis, in well-chosen and eloquent language, frequently interrupted by the plaudits of the surging multitude, officially tendered the hospitalities.

I shall, with your permission, beg leave to offer some brief observations.
Commenced his rejoinder.

One of those omnipresent characters who, as if in pursuance of some previous arrangement, are certain to be encountered in the vicinity when an accident occurs, ventured the suggestion.

He died.

In one sense this is nothing new. The school of Pope in verse ended by wire-drawing its phrase to such thinness that it could bear no weight of meaning whatever. Nor is fine writing by any means confined to America. All writers without imagination fall into it of necessity whenever they attempt the figurative. I take two examples from Mr. Merivale's "History of the Romans under the Empire," which, indeed, is full of such. "The last years of the age familiarly stiled the Augustan were singularly barren of the literary glories from which its celebrity was chiefly derived. One by one the stars in its firmament had been lost to the world; Virgil and Horace, &c., had long since died; the charm which the imagination of Livy had thrown over the earlier annals of Rome had ceased to shine on the details of almost contemporary history; and if the flood of his eloquence still continued flowing, we can hardly suppose that the stream was as rapid, as fresh, and as clear as ever." I will not waste time in criticising the bad English or the mixture of metaphor in these sentences, but will simply cite another from the same author which is even worse. "The shadowy phantom of the Republic continued to flit before the eyes of the Cæsar. There was still, he apprehended, a germ of sentiment existing, on which a scion of his own house, or even a stranger, might boldly throw himself and raise the standard of patrician independence." Now a ghost may haunt a murderer, but hardly, I should think, to scare him with the threat of taking a new lease of its old tenement. And fancy the *scion* of a *house* in the act of *throwing itself* upon a *germ of sentiment* to *raise a standard*! I am glad, since we have so much in the same kind to answer for, that this bit of horticultural rhetoric is from beyond sea. I would not be

He deceased, he passed out of existence, his spirit quitted its earthly habitation, winged its way to eternity, shook off its burden, &c.

supposed to condemn truly imaginative prose. There is a simplicity of splendor, no less than of plainness, and prose would be poor indeed if it could not find a tongue for that meaning of the mind which is behind the meaning of the words. It has sometimes seemed to me that in England there was a growing tendency to curtail language into a mere convenience, and to deicate it of all emotion as thoroughly as algebraic signs. This has arisen, no doubt, in part from that healthy national contempt of humbug which is characteristic of Englishmen, in part from that sensitiveness to the ludicrous which makes them so shy of expressing feeling, but in part also, it is to be feared, from a growing distrust, one might almost say hatred, of whatever is super-material. There is something sad in the scorn with which their journalists treat the notion of there being such a thing as a national ideal, seeming utterly to have forgotten that even in the affairs of this world the imagination is as much matter-of-fact as the understanding. If we were to trust the impression made on us by some of the cleverest and most characteristic of their periodical literature, we should think England hopelessly stranded on the good-humored cynicism of well-to-do middle-age, and should fancy it an enchanted nation, doomed to sit forever with its feet under the mahogany in that after-dinner mood which follows conscientious repletion, and which it is ill-manners to disturb with any topics more exciting than the quality of the wines. But there are already symptoms that a large class of Englishmen are getting weary of the dominion of consols and divine common-sense, and to believe that eternal three per cent is not the chief end of man, nor the highest and only kind of interest in which the powers and opportunities of England are entitled.

The quality of exaggeration has often been remarked on as typical of American character, and especially of American humor. In Dr. Petri's *Gedrängtes Handbuch der Fremdwörter*, we are told that the word *humbug* is commonly used for the exaggerations of the North-Americans. To be sure, one would be tempted to think the dream of Columbus half fulfilled, and that Europe had found in the West a nearer way to Orientalism, at least in diction. But it seems to me that a great deal of what is set down as mere extravagance is more fitly to be called intensity and picturesqueness, symptoms of the imaginative faculty in full health and strength, though producing, as yet, only the raw and formless material in which poetry is to work. By and by, perhaps, the world will see it fashioned into poem and picture, and Europe, which will be hard pushed for originality ere long, may have to thank us for a new sensation. The French continue to find Shakespeare exaggerated because he treated English just as our country-folk do when they speak of a "steep price," or say that they "freeze to" a thing. The first postulate of an original literature is that a people should use their language instinctively and unconsciously, as if it were a lively part of their growth and personality, not as the mere torpid boon of education or inheritance. Even Burns contrived to write very poor verse and prose in English. Vulgarisms are often only poetry in the egg. The late Mr. Horace Mann, in one of his public addresses, commented at some length on the beauty and moral significance of the French phrase *s'orienter*, and called on his young friends to practise upon it in life. There was not a Yankee in his audience whose problem had not always been to find out what was *about east*, and to shape his course accordingly. This charm which a familiar expression gains by being commented, as it were, and set in a new light by a foreign language, is curious and instructive. I cannot help thinking that Mr. Matthew Arnold forgets this

a little too much sometimes when he writes of the beauties of French style. It would not be hard to find in the works of French Academicians phrases as coarse as those he cites from Burke, only they are veiled by the unfamiliarity of the language. But, however this may be, it is certain that poets and peasants please us in the same way by translating words back again to their primal freshness, and infusing them with a delightful strangeness which is anything but alienation. What, for example, is Milton's "edge of battle" but a doing into English of the Latin *acies*? Was die Gans gedacht das der Schwan vollbracht, what the goose but thought, that the swan full brought (or, to de-Saxonize it a little, what the goose conceived, that the swan achieved), and it may well be that the life, invention, and vigor shown by our popular speech, and the freedom with which it is shaped to the instant want of those who use it, are of the best omen for our having a swan at last. The part I have taken on myself is that of the humbler bird.

But it is affirmed that there is something innately vulgar in the Yankee dialect. M. Sainte-Beuve says, with his usual neatness: "*Je définis un patois une ancienne langue qui a eu des malheurs, ou encore une langue toute jeune et qui n'a pas fait fortune.*" The first part of his definition applies to a dialect like the Provençal, the last to the Tuscan before Dante had lifted it into a classic, and neither, it seems to me, will quite fit a *patois*, which is not properly a dialect, but rather certain archaisms, proverbial phrases, and modes of pronunciation, which maintain themselves among the uneducated side by side with the finished and universally accepted language. Norman French, for example, or Scotch down to the time of James VI., could hardly be called *patois*, while I should be half inclined to name the Yankee a *lingo* rather than a dialect. It has retained a few words now fallen into disuse in the mother country, like *to tarry*, *to progress*, *fleshy*, *fall*, and some others; it has changed the meaning of

some, as in *freshet*; and it has clung to what I suspect to have been the broad Norman pronunciation of *e* (which Molière puts into the mouth of his rustics) in such words as *sarvant*, *parfect*, *vartoo*, and the like. It maintains something of the French sound of *a* also in words like *chamber*, *danger* (though the latter had certainly begun to take its present sound so early as 1636, when I find it sometimes spelt *dringer*). But in general it may be said that nothing can be found in it which does not still survive in some one or other of the English provincial dialects. I am not speaking now of Americanisms properly so called, that is, of words or phrases which have grown into use here either through necessity, invention, or accident, such as a *carry*, a *one-horse affair*, a *prairie*, to *vamose*. Even these are fewer than is sometimes taken for granted. But I think some fair defence may be made against the charge of vulgarity. Properly speaking, vulgarity is in the thought, and not in the word or the way of pronouncing it. Modern French, the most polite of languages, is barbarously vulgar if compared with the Latin out of which it has been corrupted, or even with Italian. There is a wider gap, and one implying greater boorishness, between *ministerium* and *métier*, or *sapiens* and *sachant*, than between *druv* and *drove*, or *agin* and *against*, which last is plainly an arrant superlative. Our rustic *coverlid* is nearer its French original than the diminutive *coverlet*, into which it has been ignorantly corrupted in politer speech. I obtained from three cultivated Englishmen at different times three diverse pronunciations of a single word, — *cowcumber*, *coocumber*, and *cucumber*. Of these the first, which is Yankee also, comes nearest to the nasality of *concombres*. Lord Ossory assures us that Voltaire saw the best society in England, and Voltaire tells his countrymen that *handkerchief* was pronounced *hankercher*. I find it so spelt in Hakluyt and elsewhere. This

enormity the Yankee still persists in, and as there is always a reason for such deviations from the sound as represented by the spelling, may we not suspect two sources of derivation, and find an ancestor for *kercher* in *couverture* rather than in *couvrechef*? And what greater phonetic vagary (which Dryden, by the way, called *segary*) in our *lingua rustica* than this *ker* for *couvre*? I copy from the fly-leaves of my books where I have noted them from time to time a few examples of pronunciation and phrase which will show that the Yankee often has antiquity and very respectable literary authority on his side. My list might be largely increased by referring to glossaries, but to them every one can go for himself, and I have gathered enough for my purpose.

I will take first those cases in which something like the French sound has been preserved in certain single letters and diphthongs. And this opens a curious question as to how long this Gallicism maintained itself in England. Sometimes a divergence in pronunciation has given us two words with different meanings, as in *genteel* and *jaunty*, which I find coming in toward the close of the seventeenth century, and wavering between *genteel* and *jan-tee*. It is usual in America to drop the *u* in words ending in *our*, — a very proper change recommended by Howell two centuries ago, and carried out by him so far as his printers would allow. This and the corresponding changes in *musique*, *musick*, and the like, which he also advocated, show that in his time the French accent indicated by the superfluous letters (for French had once nearly as strong an accent as Italian) had gone out of use. There is plenty of French accent down to the end of Elizabeth's reign. In Daniel we have *riches'* and *counsel'*, in Bishop Hall *comet'*, *chapèlain*, in Donne *pictures'*, *virtue'*, *presence'*, *mortal'*, *merit'*, *hainous'*, *giant'*, with many more, and Marston's satires are full of them. The two latter, however, are not to be relied on, as they may be suspected

of Chaucerizing. Herrick writes *baptime*. The tendency to throw the accent backward began early. But the incongruities are perplexing, and perhaps mark the period of transition. In Warner's "Albion's England" we have *creator*¹ and *creature*¹ side by side with the modern *creator* and *creature*. *E'nvy* and *e'nvyng* occur in Campion (1602), and yet *envy*¹ survived Milton. In some cases we have gone back again nearer to the French, as in *rev'enne* for *reven'ue*. I had been so used to hearing *imbecile* pronounced with the accent on the first syllable, which is in accordance with the general tendency in such matters, that I was surprised to find *imbec'ile* in a verse of Wordsworth. The dictionaries all give it so. I asked a highly cultivated Englishman, and he declared for *imbec'el*¹. In general it may be assumed that accent will finally settle on the syllable dictated by greater ease and therefore quickness of utterance. *Blas'phemous*, for example, is more rapidly pronounced than *blasphem'ous*, to which our Yankee clings, following in this the usage of many of the older poets. *Amer'i-can* is easier than *Ameri'can*, and therefore the false quantity has carried the day, though the true one may be found in George Herbert, and even so late as Cowley.

To come back to the matter in hand. Our "uplandish man" retains the soft or thin sound of the *u* in some words, such as *rule*, *truth* (sometimes also pronounced *trūth*, not *trooth*), while he says *noo* for *new*, and gives to *view* and *few* so indescribable a mixture of the two sounds with a slight nasal tincture that it may be called the Yankee shibboleth. In *rule* the least sound of *a* precedes the *u*. I find *reule* in Peacock's "Repressor." He probably pronounced it *rayoolē*, as the old French word from which it is derived was very likely to be sounded at first, with a reminiscence of its original *regula*. Tindal has *rueler*, and the Coventry Plays have *preudent*. As for *noo*, may it not claim some sanction in its derivation, whether from *nouveau*

or *neuf*, the ancient sound of which may very well have been *noof*, as nearer *novus*? *Beef* would seem more like to have come from *bufe* than from *bœuf*, unless the two were mere varieties of spelling. The Saxon *few* may have caught enough from its French cousin *peu* to claim the benefit of the same doubt as to sound; and our slang phrase *a few* (as "I licked him a few") may well appeal to *un peu* for sense and authority. Nay, might not *lick* itself turn out to be the good old word *lam* in an English disguise, if the latter should claim descent as, perhaps, he fairly might, from the Latin *lambere*? The New England *ferce* for *fierce*, and *perce* for *pierce* (sometimes heard as *fairce* and *pairce*), are also Norman. For its antiquity I cite the rhyme of *verse* and *pierce* in Chapman and Donne, and in some commendatory verses by a Mr. Berkenhead before the poems of Francis Beaumont. Our *pairlous* for *perilous* is of the same kind, and is nearer Shakespeare's *parlous* than the modern pronunciation. One other Gallicism survives in our pronunciation. Perhaps I should rather call it a semi-Gallicism, for it is the result of a futile effort to reproduce a French sound with English lips. Thus for *joint*, *employ*, *royal* we have *jjynt*, *emply*, *rōyle*, the last differing only from *rile* (*roil*) in a prolongation of the *y* sound. In Walter de Bibbesworth I find *solives* Englished by *gistes*. This, it is true, may have been pronounced *jeests*, but the pronunciation *jyests* must have preceded the present spelling, which was no doubt adopted after the radical meaning was forgotten, as analogical with other words in *oi*. In the same way after Norman-French influence had softened the *l* out of *would* (we already find *woud* for *vent* in N. F. poems), *should* followed the example, and then an *l* was put into *cou'd*, where it does not belong, to satisfy the logic of the eye, which has affected the pronunciation and even the spelling of English more than is commonly supposed. I meet with *eyster* for *oyster* as early as the fourteenth century. I find *dystrye*

for *destroy* in the Coventry Plays, *viage* in Bishop Hall and Middleton the dramatist, *bile* in Donne and Chrononhotonthologos, *line* in Hall, *ryall* and *chyse* (for *choice*) in the Coventry Plays. In Chapman's "All Fools" is the misprint of *employ* for *imply*, fairly inferring an identity of sound in the last syllable. Indeed, this pronunciation was habitual till after Pope, and Rogers tells us that the elegant Gray said *naise* for *noise* just as our rustics still do. Our *cornish* (which I find also in Herrick) remembers the French better than *cornice* does. While, clinging more closely to the Anglo-Saxon in dropping the *g* from the end of the present participle, the Yankee now and then pleases himself with an experiment in French nasality in words ending in *n*. It is not, so far as my experience goes, very common, though it may formerly have been more so. *Captng*, for instance, I never heard save in jest, the habitual form being *kepp'n*. But at any rate it is no invention of ours. In that delightful old volume, "Ane Compendious Buke of Godly and Spirituall Songs," in which I know not whether the piety itself or the simplicity of its expression be more charming, I find *burding*, *garding*, and *cousing*, and in the State Trials *uncertng* used by a gentleman. The *n* for *ng* I confess preferring.

Of Yankee preterites I find *risse* and *rize* for *rose* in Middleton and Dryden, *clim* in Spenser, *chees* (*chose*) in Sir John Mandevill, *give* (*gave*) in the Coventry Plays, *shet* (*shut*) in Golding's Ovid,* *het* in Chapman and in Weever's Epitaphs, *thriv* and *smit* in Drayton, *quit* in Ben Jonson and Henry More, and *pled* in the fastidious Landor. *Rid* for *rode* was anciently common. So likewise was *see* for *saw*, but I find it in no writer of authority, unless Chaucer's *seie* was so sounded. *Shew* is used by Hector Boece, Giles Fletcher, and Drummond of Hawthornden. Similar strong preterites, like *snew*, *thew*, and even *mew*, are

not without example. I find *sew* for *sowed* in Piers Ploughman. Indeed, the anomalies in English preterites are perplexing. We have probably transferred *flew* from *flow* (as the preterite of which I have heard it) to *fly* because we had another preterite in *fled*. Of weak preterites the Yankee retains *growed*, *blowed*, for which he has good authority, and less often *knowed*. His *sat* is merely a broad sounding of *sate*. no more inelegant than the common *got* for *gat*, which he further degrades into *gut*. When he says *darst*, he uses a form as old as Chaucer.

The Yankee has retained something of the long sound of the *a* in such words as *axe*, *wax*, pronouncing them *exe*, *wex* (shortened from *aix*, *waix*). He also says *hev* and *hed* (*hæve*, *hād*) for *have* and *had*. In most cases he follows an Anglo-Saxon usage. In *aix* for *axe* he certainly does. I find *wex* and *aisches* (*ashes*) in Pecoock, and *exe* in the Paston Letters. Chaucer wrote *hendy*. Dryden rhymes *can* with *men*, as Mr. Biglow would. Alexander Gill, Milton's teacher, in his "Logonomia" cites *hez* for *hath* as peculiar to Lincolnshire. I find *hayth* in Collier's "Bibliographical Account of Early English Literature" under the date 1584, and Lord Cromwell so wrote it. Sir Christopher Wren wrote *belcony*. Our *sect* is only the O. F. *saict*. *Thaim* for *them* was common in the sixteenth century. We have an example of the same thing in the double form of the verb *thrash*, *thresh*. While the New-Englander cannot be brought to say *instead* for *instid* (commonly 'stid where not the last word in a sentence), he changes the *i* into *e* in *red* for *rid*, *tell* for *till*, *hender* for *hinder*, *rense* for *rinse*. I find *red* in the old interlude of "Thersytes," *tell* in a letter of Daborne to Henslowe, and also, I shudder to mention it, in a letter of the great Duchess of Marlborough, Atossa herself! It occurs twice in a single verse of the Chester Plays, which I copy as containing another Yankeeism:—

"Tell the day of dome, tell the beaunes
blow."

* Cited in Warton's Obs. Faery Q.

From this word *blow* is formed *blowth*, which I heard again this summer after a long interval. Mr. Wright* explains it as meaning "a blossom." With us a single blossom is a *blow*, while *blowth* means the blossoming in general. A farmer would say that there was a good *blowth* on his fruit-trees. The word retreats farther inland and away from the railways, year by year. Wither rhymes *hinder* with *slender*, and Shakespeare and Lovelace have *renched* for *rinsed*. In "Gammer Gurton" is *sence* for *since*; Marlborough's Duchess so writes it, and Donne rhymes *since* with *Amiens* and *patience*, Bishop Hall and Otway with *pretence*, Chapman with *citizens*, Dryden with *providence*. Indeed, why should not *silhence* take that form? Dryden's wife (an earl's daughter) has *tell* for *till*, Margaret, mother of Henry VII., writes *seche* for *such*, and our *ef* finds authority in the old form *yeffe*.

E sometimes takes the place of *u*, as *judge*, *tredge*, *bresh*. I find *tredge* in the interlude of "Jack Jugler," *bresh* in a citation by Collier from "London Cries" of the middle of the seventeenth century, and *resche* for *rush* (fifteenth century) in the very valuable "Volume of Vocabularies" edited by Mr. Wright. *Resce* is one of the Anglo-Saxon forms of the word in Bosworth's A. S. Dictionary. The Yankee always shortens the *u* in the ending *ture*, making *ventur*, *natur*, *pic-tur*, and so on. This was common, also, among the educated of the last generation. I am inclined to think it may have been once universal, and I certainly think it more elegant than the vile *vencher*, *naycher*, *pickcher*, that have taken its place, sounding like the invention of a lexicographer with his mouth full of hot pudding. Nash in his "Pierce Penniless" has *ventur*. and so spells it, and I meet it also in Spenser, Drayton, Ben Jonson, Herrick, and Prior. Spenser has *ventur* which can be contracted only from

tortur and not from *torchur*. Quarles rhymes *nature* with *creator*, and Dryden with *satire*, which he doubtless pronounced according to its older form of *satyr*. Quarles has also *torture* and *mortar*. Mary Boleyn writes *kreatur*.

I shall now give some examples which cannot so easily be ranked under any special head. Gill charges the Eastern counties with *kiver* for *cover*, and *ta* for *to*. The Yankee pronounces both *too* and *to* like *ta* (like the *tau* in *touch*) where they are not emphatic. When they are, both become *tu*. In old spelling, *to* is the common (and indeed correct) form of *too*, which is only to with the sense of *in addition*. I suspect that the sound of our *too* has caught something from the French *tout*, and it is possible that the old *too-too* is not a reduplication, but a reminiscence of the feminine form of the same word (*toute*) as anciently pronounced, with the *e* not yet silenced. Gill gives a Northern origin to *geaun* for *gown* and *waund* for *wound* (*vulnus*). Lovelace has *waund*, but there is something too dreadful in suspecting Spenser (who borealized in his pastorals) of having ever been guilty of *geaun*! And yet some delicate mouths even now are careful to observe the Hibernicism of *ge-ard* for *guard*, and *ge-ur*l for *girl*. Sir Philip Sidney (*credite posteri!*) wrote *furr* for *far*. I would hardly have believed it had I not seen it in *fac-simile*. As some consolation, I find *furder* in Lord Bacon and Donne, and Wither rhymes *far* with *cur*. The Yankee, who omits the final *d* in many words, as do the Scotch, makes up for it by adding one in *geound*. The purist does not feel the loss of the *d* sensibly in *lawn* and *you*, from the former of which it has dropped again after a wrongful adoption (retained in *lauundry*), while it properly belongs to the latter. But what shall we make of *git*, *yit*, and *vis*? I find *vis* and *git* in Warner's "Albion's England," yet rhyming with *wit*, *admit*, and *fit* in Donne, with *wit* in the "Revenger's Tragedy." Beaumont, and Suckling, with *writ* in Dryden, and latest of all

* Dictionary of Obsolete and Provincial English.

with *wit* in Sir Hanbury Williams. Prior rhymes *fitting* and *begetting*. Worse is to come. Among others, Donne rhymes *again* with *sin*, and Quarles repeatedly with *in*. Ben for *been*, of which our dear Whittier is so fond, has the authority of Sackville, "Gammer Gurton" (the work of a bishop), Chapman, Dryden, and many more, though *bin* seems to have been the common form. Whittier's accenting the first syllable of *rom'ance* finds an accomplice in Drayton among others, and though manifestly wrong, is analogous with *Rom'ans*. Of other Yankeeisms, whether of form or pronunciation, which I have met with I add a few at random. Pecock writes *sowdiers* (*sogers*, *soudoyers*), and Chapman and Gill *sodder*. This absorption of the *l* is common in various dialects, especially in the Scottish. Pecock writes also *biyende*, and the authors of "Jack Jugler" and "Gammer Gurton" *yender*. The Yankee includes "*yon*" in the same category, and says "hither an' yen," for "to and fro." (Cf. German *jenseits*.) Pecock and plenty more have *wrastle*. Tindal has *agynste*, *gretter*, *shett*, *ondone*, *debytë*, and *scace*. "Jack Jugler" has *scacely* (which I have often heard, though *skurce* is the common form), and Donne and Dryden make *great* rhyme with *set*. In the inscription on Caxton's tomb I find *ynd* for *end*, which the Yankee more often makes *eend*, still using familiarly the old phrase "right anend" for "continuously." His "stret (straight) along" in the same sense, which I thought peculiar to him, I find in Pecock. Tindal's *debytë* for *deputy* is so perfectly Yankee that I could almost fancy the brave martyr to have been deacon of the First Parish at Jaalam Centre. "Jack Jugler" further gives us *play-sent* and *sartayne*. Dryden rhymes *certain* with *parting*, and Chapman and Ben Jonson use *certain*, as the Yankee always does, for *certainly*. The "Coventry Mysteries" have *occapied*, *massage*, *nateralle*, *maternal* (*material*), and *meracles*,—all excellent

Yankeeisms. In the "Quatre fils," Aymon (1504),* is *vertus* for *virtuous*. Thomas Fuller called *volume vollum*, I suspect, for he spells it *volumne*. However, *per contra*, Yankees habitually say *colume* for *column*. Indeed, to prove that our ancestors brought their pronunciation with them from the Old Country, and have not wantonly debased their mother tongue, I need only to cite the words *scriptur*, *Israll*, *athists*, and *cherfulness* from Governor Bradford's "History." Brampton Gurdon writes *shet* in a letter to Winthrop. So the good man wrote them, and so the good descendants of his fellow-exiles still pronounce them. *Pur-tend* (*pretend*) has crep' like a serpent into the "Paradise of Dainty Devices"; *purvide*, which is not so bad, is in Chaucer. These, of course, are universal vulgarisms, and not peculiar to the Yankee. Butler has a Yankee phrase, and pronunciation too, in, "To which these carr'ings-on did tend." Langham or Laneham, who wrote an account of the festivities at Kenilworth in honor of Queen Bess, and who evidently tried to spell phonetically, makes *sorrowis* into *sororz*. Herrick writes *hollow* for *halloo*, and perhaps pronounced it (*horresco suggerens*!) *holla*, as Yankees do. Why not, when it comes from *holà*? I find *ffelaschyppe* (fellowship) in the Coventry Plays. Spenser and his queen neither of them scrupled to write *afore*, and the former feels no inelegance even in *chaw* and *idee*. 'Fore was common till after Herrick. Dryden has *do's* for *does*, and his wife spells *worse* *wosce*. *Afeared* was once universal. Warner has *ery* for *ever a*; nay, he also has *illy*, with which we were once ignorantly reproached by persons more familiar with Murray's Grammar than with English literature. And why not *illy*? Mr. Bartlett says it is "a word used by writers of an inferior class, who do not seem to perceive that *ill* is itself an adverb, without the termination *ly*," and

* Cited in Collier. (I give my authority where I do not quote from the original book.)

quotes Dr. Messer, President of Brown University, as asking triumphantly, "Why don't you say *welly*?" I should like to have had Dr. Messer answer his own question. It would be truer to say that it was used by people who still remembered that *ill* was an adjective, the shortened form of *evil*, out of which Shakespeare ventured to make *evilly*. The objection to *illy* is not an etymological one, but simply that it is contrary to good usage, — a very sufficient reason. *Ill* as an adverb was at first a vulgarism, precisely like the rustic's when he says, "I was treated *bad*." May not the reason of this exceptional form be looked for in that tendency to dodge what is hard to pronounce, to which I have already alluded? If the letters were distinctly uttered, as they should be, it would take too much time to say *ill-ly*, *well-ly*, and it is to be observed that we have avoided *smally** and *tally* in the same way, though we add *ish* to them without hesitation in *smallish* and *tallish*. We have, to be sure, *dully* and *fully*, but for the one we prefer *stupidly*, and the other (though this may have come from eliding the *y* before *as*) is giving way to *full*. The uneducated, whose utterance is slower, still make adverbs when they will by adding *like* to all manner of adjectives. We have had *big* charged upon us, because we use it where an Englishman would now use *great*. I fully admit that it were better to distinguish between them, allowing to *big* a certain contemptuous quality; but as for authority, I want none better than that of Jeremy Taylor, who, in his noble sermon "On the Return of Prayer," speaks of "Jesus, whose spirit was meek and gentle up to the greatness of the *biggest* example." As for our double negative, I shall waste no time in quoting instances of it, because it was once as universal in English as it still is in the neo-Latin languages, where it does not strike us as vulgar. I am not sure

that the loss of it is not to be regretted. But surely I shall admit the vulgarity of slurring or altogether eliding certain terminal consonants? I admit that a clear and sharp-cut enunciation is one of the crowning charms and elegancies of speech. Words so uttered are like coins fresh from the mint, compared with the worn and dingy drudges of long service, — I do not mean American coins, for those look less badly the more they lose of their original ugliness. No one is more painfully conscious than I of the contrast between the rifle-crack of an Englishman's *yes* and *no*, and the wet-fuse drawl of the same monosyllables in the mouths of my countrymen. But I do not find the dropping of final consonants disagreeable in Allan Ramsay or Burns, nor do I believe that our literary ancestors were sensible of that inelegance in the fusing them together of which we are conscious. How many educated men pronounce the *t* in *chestnut*? how many say *pentise* for *penthouse*, as they should? When a Yankee skipper says that he is "boun' for Gloster" (not Gloucester, with the leave of the Universal Schoolmaster), he but speaks like Chaucer or an old ballad-singer, though they would have pronounced it *boon*. This is one of the cases where the *d* is surreptitious, and has been added in compliment to the verb *bind*, with which it has nothing to do. If we consider the root of the word (though of course I grant that every race has a right to do what it will with what is so peculiarly its own as its speech), the *d* has no more right there than at the end of *gone*, where it is often put by children, who are our best guides to the sources of linguistic corruption, and the best teachers of its processes. Cromwell, minister of Henry VIII., writes *worle* for *world*. Chapman has *wan* for *wand*, and *lawn* has rightfully displaced *lannd*, though with no thought, I suspect, of etymology. Rogers tells us that Lady Bathurst sent him some letters written to William III. by Queen Mary, in which she addresses him as "*Dear Husban*."

* The word occurs in a letter of Mary Boyley.

The old form *expoun'*, which our farmers use, is more correct than the form with a barbarous *d* tacked on which has taken its place. Of the kind opposite to this, like our *gound* for *gown*, and the London cockney's *wind* for *wine*, I find *drown* for *drown* in the "Misfortunes of Arthur" (1584), and in Swift. And, by the way, whence came the long sound of *wind* which our poets still retain, and which survives in "winding" a horn, a totally different word from "winding" a kite-string? We say *behind* and *hinder* (comparative), and yet *to hinder*. Shakespeare pronounced *kind kind*, or what becomes of his play on that word and *kin* in Hamlet? Nay, did he not even (shall I dare to hint it?) drop the final *d* as the Yankee still does? John Lilly plays in the same way on *kindred* and *kindness*. But to come to some other ancient instances. Warner rhymes *bounds* with *crowns*, *grounds* with *towns*, *text* with *sex*, *worst* with *crust*, *interrupts* with *cups*; Drayton, *defects* with *sex*; Chapman, *amends* with *cleanse*; Webster, *defects* with *checks*; Ben Jonson, *minds* with *combines*; Marston, *trust* and *obsequious*, *clothes* and *shows*; Dryden gives the same sound to *clothes*, and has also *minds* with *designs*. Of course, I do not affirm that their ears may not have told them that these were imperfect rhymes (though I am by no means sure even of that), but they surely would never have tolerated any such had they suspected the least vulgarity in them. Prior has the rhyme *first* and *trust*, but puts it into the mouth of a landlady. Swift has *stunted* and *burnt it*, an intentionally imperfect rhyme, no doubt, but which I cite as giving precisely the Yankee pronunciation of *burned*. Donne couples in unhallowed wedlock *after* and *matter*, thus seeming to give to both the true Yankee sound; and it is not uncommon to find *after* and *daughter*. Worse than all, in one of Dodsley's Old Plays we have *ontious* rhyming with *minions*, — I have tears in my eyes while I record it. And yet what is viler than the uni-

versal *Misses* (*M's.*) for *mistress*? This was once a vulgarism, and in "The Miseries of Inforced Marriage" the rhyme (printed as prose in Dodsley's Old Plays by Collier),

"To make my young *mistress*,
Delighting in *kisses*,"

is put in the mouth of the clown. Our people say *Injun* for *Indian*. The tendency to make this change where *i* follows *d* is common. The Italian *giorno* and French *jour* from *diurnus* are familiar examples. And yet *Injun* is one of those deprivations which the taste challenges peremptorily, though it have the authority of Charles Cotton — who rhymes "*Indies*" with "*cringes*" — and four English lexicographers, beginning with Dr. Sheridan, bid us say *invidgeous*. Yet after all it is no worse than the debasement which all our terminations in *tion* and *tience* have undergone, which yet we hear with *resignashun* and *payshunce*, though it might have aroused both *impat-i-ence* and *indigna-ti-on* in Shakespeare's time. When George Herbert tells us that if the sermon be dull,

"God takes a text and preacheth pati-ence."

the prolongation of the word seems to convey some hint at the longanimity of the virtue. Consider what a poor curial we have made of Ocean. There was something of his heave and expanse in *o-ce-an*, and Fletcher knew how to use it when he wrote so fine a verse as the second of these, the best deep-sea verse I know, —

"In desperate storms stem with a little ruder
The tumbling ruins of the ocean."

Oceanus was not then wholly shorn of his divine proportions, and our modern *oshun* sounds like the gush of small-beer in comparison. Some other contractions of ours have a vulgar air about them. *More'n* for *more than*, as one of the worst, may stand for a type of such. Yet our old dramatists are full of such obscurations (elisions they can hardly be called) of the *th*, making *wh'e'r* of *whether*, *bro'r* of

brother, *smo'r* of *smother*, *mo'r* of *mother*, and so on. Indeed, it is this that explains the word *rare* (which has Dryden's support), and which we say of meat where an Englishman would use *underdone*. I do not believe, with the dictionaries, that it had ever anything to do with the Icelandic *hrár* (*raw*), as it plainly has not in *rareripe*, which means earlier ripe. And I do not believe it, for this reason, that the earlier form of the word with us was, and the commoner now in the inland parts still is, so far as I can discover, *raredone*. I find *rather* as a monosyllable in Donne, and still better, as giving the sound, rhyming with *fair* in Warner. The contraction *more'n* I find in the old play "Fumus Troes," in a verse where the measure is so strongly accented as to leave it beyond doubt, —

"A golden crown whose heirs
More than half the world subdue."

It may be, however, that the contraction is in "th' orld." Is our *gin* for *given* more violent than *mar'l* for *marvel*, which was once common, and which I find as late as Herrick? Nay, Herrick has *gin* (spelling it *g'en*), too, as do the Scotch, who agree with us likewise in preferring *chimly* to *chimney*.

I will now leave pronunciation and turn to words or phrases which have been supposed peculiar to us, only pausing to pick up a single dropped stitch, in the pronunciation of the word *sup'reme*, which I had thought native till I found it in the well-languaged Daniel. I will begin with a word of which I have never met with any example in print. We express the first stage of withering in a green plant suddenly cut down by the verb *to wilt*. It is, of course, own cousin of the German *welken*, but I have never come upon it in print, and my own books of reference give me faint help. Graff gives *welhèn*, *marcescere*, and refers to *welk* (*weak*), and conjecturally to A. S. *hvelan*. The A. S. *welwian* (*to wither*) is nearer, but not so near as two words in the Icelandic, which perhaps put us on the track of

its ancestry. — *velgi* (*tepefacere*) and *velki*, with the derivative meaning *contumure*. *Wilt*, at any rate, is a good word, filing, as it does, a sensible gap between drooping and withering, and the imaginative phrase "he wilted right down," like "he caved right in," is a true Americanism. *Wilt* occurs in English provincial glossaries, but is explained by *wither*, which with us it does not mean. We have a few words such as *cache*, *cohog*, *carry* (*portage*), *shoot* (*chute*), *timber* (*forest*), *bush-whack* (to pull a boat along by the bushes on the edge of a stream), *buck-eye* (a picturesque word for the horse-chestnut); but how many can we be said to have fairly brought into the language, as Alexander Gill, who first mentions Americanisms, meant it when he said, "*Sed et ab Americanis nonnulla mutuamur ut MAIZ et CANOA*"? Very few, I suspect, and those mostly by borrowing from the French, German, Spanish, or Indian. "The Dipper" for the "Great Bear" strikes me as having a native air. *Bogus*, in the sense of *worthless*, is undoubtedly ours, but is, I more than suspect, a corruption of the French *bagasse* (from low Latin *bagasea*), which travelled up the Mississippi from New Orleans, where it was used for the refuse of the sugarcane. It is true we have modified the meaning of some words. We use *freshet* in the sense of *flood*, for which I have not chanced upon any authority. Our New England cross between Ancient Pistol and Dugald Dalgetty, Captain Underhill, uses the word (1638) to mean a *current*, and I do not recollect it elsewhere in that sense. I therefore leave it with a ? for future explorers. *Crick* for *creek* I find in Captain John Smith and in the dedication of Fuller's "Holy Warre," and *ruu*, meaning a *small stream*, in Waymouth's "Voyage" (1605). *Humans* for *men*, which Mr. Bartlett includes in his "Dictionary of Americanisms," is Chapman's habitual phrase in his translation of Homer. I find it also in the old play of "The Hog hath lost his Pearl." *Dogs* for *andirons* is still cur-

rent in New England, and in Walter de Biblessworth I find *chiens* glossed in the margin by *andirons*. *Gunning* for *shooting* is in Drayton. We once got credit for the poetical word *fall* for *autumn*, but Mr. Bartlett and the last edition of Webster's Dictionary refer us to Dryden. It is even older, for I find it in Drayton, and Bishop Hall has *autumn fall*. Middleton plays upon the word: "May'st thou have a reasonable good *spring*, for thou art like to have many dangerous *foul falls*." Lord Herbert of Cherbury (more properly perhaps than even Sidney, the last *preux chevalier*) has "the Emperor's folks" just as a Yankee would say it. *Loan* for *lend*, with which we have hitherto been blackened, I must retort upon the mother island, for it appears so long ago as in "Albion's England." *Fleshy*, in the sense of *stout*, may claim Ben Jonson's warrant. *Chore* is also Jonson's word, and I am inclined to prefer it to *chare* and *char*, because I think that I see a more natural origin for it in the French *jour*—whence it might come to mean a day's work, and thence a job—than anywhere else. *At onst* for *at once* I thought a corruption of our own, till I found it in the Chester Plays. I am now inclined to suspect it no corruption at all, but only an erratic and obsolete superlative *at onest*. *To progress* was slung in our teeth till Mr. Pickering retorted with Shakespeare's "doth *pro'gress* down thy cheeks." I confess that I was never satisfied with this answer, because the accent was different, and because the word might here be reckoned a substantive quite as well as a verb. Mr. Bartlett (in his Dictionary above cited) adds a *surrebutter* in a verse from Ford's "Broken Heart." Here the word is clearly a verb, but with the accent unhappily still on the first syllable. Mr. Bartlett says that he "cannot say whether the word was used in Bacon's time or not." It certainly was, and with the accent we give to it. Ben Jonson, in the "Alchemist," has this verse,—

"Progress' so from extreme unto extreme."

Surely we may now sleep in peace, and our English cousins will forgive us, since we have cleared ourselves from any suspicion of originality in the matter! *Poor* for *lean*, *thirds* for *dower*, and *dry* for *thirsty* I find in Middleton's plays. *Dry* is also in Skelton and in the "World" (1754). In a note on Middleton, Mr. Dyce thinks it needful to explain the phrase *I can't tell* (universal in America) by the gloss *I could not say*. Middleton also uses *sneeked*, which I had believed an Americanism till I saw it there. It is, of course, only another form of *snatch*, analogous to *theek* and *thatch* (cf. the proper names Dekker and Thacher), *break* (*brack*) and *breach*, *make* (still common with us) and *match*. '*Long on* for *occasionally* by ("who is this 'long on?") occurs likewise in Middleton. '*Cause why* is in Chaucer. *Raising* (an English version of the French *leaven*) for *yeast* is employed by Gayton in his "Festivous Notes on Don Quixote." I have never seen an instance of our New England word *emptins* in the same sense, nor can I divine its original. Gayton has *limekill*; also *shuts* for *shutters*, and the latter is used by Mrs. Hutchinson in her "Life of Colonel Hutchinson." Bishop Hall, and Purchas in his "Pilgrims," have *chist* for *chest*, and it is certainly nearer *cista*, as well as to its form in the Teutonic languages, whence probably we got it. We retain the old sound in *cist*, but *chest* is as old as Chaucer. Lovelace says *wropt* for *wrapt*. "Musicianer" I had always associated with the militia-musters of my boyhood, and too hastily concluded it an abomination of our own, but Mr. Wright calls it a Norfolk word, and I find it to be as old as 1642 by an extract in Collier. "Not worth the time of day" had passed with me for native till I saw it in Shakespeare's "Pericles." For *slick* (which is only a shorter sound of *sleek*, like *crick* and the now universal *britches* for *breeches*) I will only call Chapman and Jonson. "That's a sure card!" and "That's a stinger!" both sound like modern slang, but you will find the one

in the old interlude of "Thersytes" (1537), and the other in Middleton. "Right here" a favorite phrase with our orators and with a certain class of our editors, turns up *passim* in the Chester and Coventry plays. Mr. Dickens found something very ludicrous in what he considered our neologism *right away*. But I find a phrase very like it, and which I half suspect to be a misprint for it, in "Gammer Gurton":—

"Lyght it and bring it tite away."

After all, what is it but another form of *straightway*? *Cussedness*, meaning *wickedness*, *malignity*, and *cuss*, a sneaking, ill-natured fellow, in such phrases as "He done it out o' pure cussedness," and "He is a nateral cuss," have been commonly thought Yankeeisms. To vent certain contemptuously indignant moods they are admirable in their rough-and-ready way. But neither is our own. *Cursvdenesse*, in the same sense of malignant wickedness, occurs in the Coventry Plays, and *cuss* may perhaps claim to have come in with the Conqueror. At least the term is also French. Saint Simon uses it and confesses its usefulness. Speaking of the Abbé Dubois he says, "Qui étoit en plein ce qu'un mauvais François appelle un *sacre*, mais qui ne se peut guère exprimer autrement." "Not worth a cuss," though supported by "not worth a damn," may be a mere corruption, since "not worth a *cress*" is in "Piers Ploughman." "I don't see it" was the popular slang a year or two ago, and seemed to spring from the soil; but no, it is in Cibber's "Careless Husband." "*Green sauce*" for *vegetables* I meet in Beaumont and Fletcher, Gayton, and elsewhere. Our rustic pronunciation *sahce* (for either the diphthong *au* was anciently pronounced *ah*, or else we have followed abundant analogy in changing it to the latter sound, as we have in *chance*, *dance*, and so many more) may be the older one, and at least gives some hint at its ancestor *salsa*. *Warn*, in the sense of *notify*, is, I believe, now pe-

culiar to us, but Peacock so employs it. *To cotton to* is, I rather think, an Americanism. The nearest approach to it I have found is *cotton together*, in Congreve's "Love for Love." *To cotton or cotten*, in another sense, is old and common. Our word means to *cling*, and its origin, possibly, is to be sought in another direction, perhaps in A. S. *cvead*, which means *mud*, *clay* (both proverbially clinging), or better yet, in the Icelandic *qvoda* (otherwise *kód*), meaning *resin* and *glue*, which are *κατ' ἐξοχήν* sticky substances. *To spit cotton* is, I think, American, and also, perhaps, *to flax for to beat*. *To the halves* still survives among us, though apparently obsolete in England. It means either to let or to hire a piece of land, receiving half the profit in money or in kind (*partibus locare*). I mention it because in a note by some English editor, to which I have lost my reference, I have seen it wrongly explained. The editors of Nares cite Burton. *To put*, in the sense of *to go*, as *Put!* for *Begone!* would seem our own, and yet it is strictly analogous to the French *se mettre à la voie*, and the Italian *mettersi in via*. Indeed, Dante has a verse,

"*To sarei* [for *mi sarei*] già messo per lo sentiero,"

which, but for the indignity, might be translated,

"I should, ere this, have *put* along the way."

I deprecate in advance any share in General Banks's notions of international law, but we may all take a just pride in his exuberant eloquence as something distinctively American. When he spoke a few years ago of "letting the Union slide," even those who, for political purposes, reproached him with the sentiment, admired the indigenous virtue of his phrase. Yet I find "let the world slide" in Heywood's "Edward IV.," and in Beaumont and Fletcher's "Wit without Money" Valentine says,

"Will you go drink,
And let the world slide?"

In the one case it is put into the mouth of a clown, in the other, of a gentleman, and was evidently proverbial. It has even higher sanction, for Chaucer writes,

"Well nigh all other curēs *let he slide.*"

Mr. Bartlett gives "above one's bend" as an Americanism; but compare Hamlet's "to the top of my bent." *In his tracks* for *immediately* has acquired an American accent, and passes where he can for a native, but is an importation nevertheless; for what is he but the Latin *e vestigio*, or at best the Norman French *eneslespas*, both which have the same meaning? *Hotfoot* (provincial also in England), I find in the old romance of "Tristan,"

"*Si s'en parti* CHAUT PAS."

Like for *as* is never used in New England, but is universal in the South and West. It has on its side the authority of two kings (*ego sum rex Romanorum et supra grammaticam*), Henry VIII. and Charles I. This were ample, without throwing into the scale the scholar and poet Daniel. *Them* was used as a nominative by the majesty of Edward VI., by Sir P. Hoby, and by Lord Paget (in Froude's "History"). I have never seen any passage adduced where *guess* was used as the Yankee uses it. The word was familiar in the mouths of our ancestors, but with a different shade of meaning from that we have given it, which is something like *rather think*, though the Yankee implies a confident certainty by it when he says, "I guess I *du!*" There are two examples in Otway, one of which ("So in the struggle, I guess the note was lost") perhaps might serve our purpose, and Coleridge's

"I guess 't was fearful there to see"

certainly comes very near. But I have a higher authority than either in Selten, who, in one of his notes to the "Polyolbion," writes, "The first inventor of them (I *guess* you dislike not the addition) was one Berthold Swartz." Here he must mean by it, "I take it

for granted." Another peculiarity almost as prominent is the beginning sentences, especially in answer to questions, with "well." Put before such a phrase as "How d'e do?" it is commonly short, and has the sound of *wul*, but in reply it is deliberative, and the various shades of meaning which can be conveyed by difference of intonation, and by prolonging or abbreviating, I should vainly attempt to describe. I have heard *oo-ahl, wahl, ahl, wahl*, and something nearly approaching the sound of the *le* in *able*. Sometimes before "I" it dwindles to a mere *l*, as "l I dunno." A friend of mine (why should I not please myself, though I displease him, by brightening my page with the initials of the most exquisite of humorists, J. H.?) told me that he once heard five "wells," like pioneers, precede the answer to an inquiry about the price of land. The first was the ordinary *wul*, in deference to custom; the second, the long, perpending *ooahl*, with a falling inflection of the voice; the third, the same, but with the voice rising, as if in despair of a conclusion, into a plaintively nasal whine; the fourth, *wulh*, ending in the aspirate of a sigh; and then, fifth, came a short, sharp *wal*, showing that a conclusion had been reached. I have used this latter form in the "Biglow Papers," because, if enough nasality be added, it represents most nearly the average sound of what I may call the interjection.

A locution prevails in the Southern and Middle States which is so curious that, though never heard in New England, I will give a few lines to its discussion, the more readily because it is extinct elsewhere. I mean the use of *allow* in the sense of *affirm*, as "I allow that 's a good horse." I find the word so used in 1558 by Anthony Jenkinson in Hakluyt: "Corne they sowe not, neither doe eate any bread, mocking the Christians for the same, and disabling our strengthe, saying we live by eating the toppe of a weede, and drinke a drinke made of the same, *allowing* theyr great devouring of flesh

and drinking of milke to be the increase of theyr strength." That is, they undervalued our strength, and affirmed their own to be the result of a certain diet. In another passage of the same narrative the word has its more common meaning of approving or praising: "The said king, much *allowing* this declaration, said." Duncane quotes Bracton *sub voce* ADLOCARE for the meaning "to admit as proved," and the transition from this to "affirm" is by no means violent. At the same time, when we consider some of the meanings of *allow* in old English, and of *allouer* in old French, and also remember that the verbs *prize* and *praise* are from one root, I think we must admit *allaudare* to a share in the paternity of *allow*. The sentence from Hakluyt would read equally well, "contemning our strengthe, . . . and praising (or valuing) their great eating of flesh as the cause of their increase in strength." After all, if we confine ourselves to *allocare*, it may turn out that the word was somewhere and somewhen used for *to bet*, analogously to *put up*, *put down*, *post* (cf. Spanish *apostar*), and the like. I hear boys in the street continually saying, "I bet that's a good horse," or what not, meaning by no means to risk anything beyond their opinion in the matter.

The word *improve*, in the sense of "to occupy, make use of, employ," as Dr. Pickering defines it, he long ago proved to be no neologism. He would have done better, I think, had he substituted *profit by* for *employ*. He cites Dr. Franklin as saying that the word had never, so far as he knew, been used in New England before he left it in 1723, except in Dr. Mather's "Remarkable Providences," which he oddly calls a "very old book." Franklin, as Dr. Pickering goes on to show, was mistaken. Mr. Bartlett in his "Dictionary" merely abridges Pickering. Both of them should have confined the application of the word to material things, its extension to which is all that is peculiar in the supposed American use of it. For surely "Com-

plete Letter-Writers" have been "*improving* this opportunity" time out of mind. I will illustrate the word a little further, because Pickering cites no English authorities. Skelton has a passage in his "Phyllip Sparowe," which I quote the rather as it contains also the word *allowed*, and as it distinguishes *improve* from *employ*:—

"His [Chaucer's] Englysh well allowed,
So as it is *enproved*,
For as it is *employd*,
There is no English voyd."

Here the meaning is *to profit by*. In Fuller's "Holy Warre" (1647), we have "The Egyptians standing on the firm ground, were thereby enabled to *improve* and enforce their darts to the utmost." Here the word might certainly mean *to make use of*. Mrs. Hutchinson (Life of Colonel H) uses the word in the same way: "And therefore did not *emproove* his interest to engage the country in the quarrell." I find it also in "Strength out of Weakness" (1652), and Plutarch's "Morals" (1714), but I know of only one example of its use in the purely American sense, and that is, "a very good *improvement* for a mill" in the "State Trials" (Speech of the Attorney-General in the Lady Ivy's case, 1684). Swift in one of his letters says: "There is not an acre of land in Ireland turned to half its advantage; yet it is better *improved* than the people."* In the sense of *employ*, I could cite a dozen old English authorities.

In running over the fly-leaves of those delightful folios for this reference, I find a note which reminds me of another word, for our abuse of which we have been deservedly ridiculed. I mean *lady*. It is true I might cite the example of the Italian *donna* † (*domina*), which has been treated in the same way by a whole nation, and not, as *lady* among us, by the uncultivated only. It perhaps grew into use in the half-democratic republics of Italy in the same way and for the same reasons

* Swift, letter to Brandorth, O. R. I., 154.

† *Dame*, in English, is a decayed gentleman of the same family.

as with us. But I admit that our abuse of the word is villanous. I know of an orator who once said in a public meeting where bonnets preponderated, that "the ladies were last at the cross and first at the tomb"! But similar sins were committed before our day and in the mother country. In the "State Trials" I learn of "a *gentlewoman* that lives cook with" such a one, and I hear the Lord High Steward speaking of the wife of a waiter at a bagnio as a *gentlewoman*! From the same authority, by the way, I can state that our vile habit of chewing tobacco had the somewhat unsavory example of Titus Oates, and I know by tradition from an eye-witness that the elegant General Burgoyne partook of the same vice. Howell, in one of his letters (dated 26 August, 1623), speaks thus of another "institution" which many have thought American: "They speak much of that boisterous Bishop of Halverstadt (for so they term him here), that, having taken a place wher there were two Monasteries of Nuns and Friers, he caus'd divers feather-beds to be rip'd, and all the feathers to be thrown in a great Hall, whither the Nuns and Friers were thrust naked with their bodies oil'd and pitch'd. and to tumble among the feathers." Howell speaks as if the thing were new to him, and I know not if the "boisterous" Bishop was the inventor of it, but I find it practised in England before our Revolution.

Before leaving the subject, I will add a few comments made from time to time on the margin of Mr. Bartlett's excellent "Dictionary," to which I am glad thus publicly to acknowledge my many obligations. "Avails" is good old English, and the *vails* of Sir Joshua Reynolds's porter are famous. Averse *from*, averse *to*, and in connection with them the English vulgarism "different *to*." The corrupt use of *to* in these cases, as well as in the Yankee "he lives to Salem," "to home," and others, must be a very old one, for in the one case it plainly arose from confounding the two French preposi-

tions *à* (from Latin *ad* and *ab*), and in the other from translating the first of them. I once thought "different to" a modern vulgarism, and Mr. Thackeray, on my pointing it out to him in "Henry Esmond," confessed it to be an anachronism. Mr. Bartlett refers to "the old writers quoted in Richardson's Dictionary" for "different to," but in my edition of that work all the examples are with *from*. But I find *to* used invariably by Sir R. Hawkins in Hakluyt. *Banjo* is a negro corruption of O. E. *bandore*. *Bind-weed* can hardly be modern, for *wood-bind* is old and radically right, intertwining itself through *bindan* and *windan* with classic stems. *Bobolink*: is this a contraction for Bob o' Lincoln? I find *bobolynes*, in one of the poems attributed to Skelton, where it may be rendered *giddy-pate*, a term very fit for the bird in his ecstasies. *Cruel* for *great* is in Hakluyt. *Bowling-alley* is in Nash's "Pierce Penniless." *Curious*, meaning nice, occurs continually in old writers, and is as old as Pecoek's "Repressor." *Droger* is O. E. *drugger*. *Educational* is in Burke. *Feeze* is only a form of *fizz*. *To fix*, in the American sense, I find used by the Commissioners of the United Colonies so early as 1675, "their arms well *fixed* and fit for service." *To take the foot in the hand* is German; so is *to go under*. *Gundalow* is old: I find *gundelo* in Hakluyt, and *gundello* in Booth's reprint of the folio Shakespeare of 1623. *Gonoff* is O. E. *gnoffe*. *Heap* is in "Piers Ploughman" ("and other names *an heap*"), and in Hakluyt ("seeing such a *heap* of their enemies ready to devour them"). *To liquor* is in the "Puritan" ("call 'em in, and hquor 'em a little"). *To loaf*: this, I think, is unquestionably German. *Laufen* is pronounced *lofen* in some parts of Germany, and I once heard one German student say to another, *Ich lauf* (lofe) *hier bis du wiederkehrst*, and he began accordingly to saunter up and down, in short, to *loaf*. *To mull*, Mr. Bartlett says, means "to soften, to dispirit," and

quotes from "Margaret," — "There has been a pretty considerable *mullin* going on among the doctors," — where it surely cannot mean what he says it does. We have always heard *mulling* used for *stirring*, *bustling*, sometimes in an underhand way. It is a metaphor derived probably from *mulling* wine, and the word itself must be a corruption of *mell*, from O. F. *mesler*. *Pair* of stairs is in Hakluyt. *To pull up stakes* is in Curwen's Journal, and therefore pre-Revolutionary. I think I have met with it earlier. *Raise*: under this word Mr. Bartlett omits "to raise a house," that is, the frame of a wooden one, and also the substantive formed from it, a *raisin*'. *Retire for go to bed* is in Fielding's "Amelia." *Setting-poles* cannot be new, for I find "some *set* [the boats] with long *poles*" in Hakluyt. *Shoulder-hitters*: I find that *shoulder-striker* is old, though I have lost the reference to my authority. *Suag* is no new word, though perhaps the Western application of it is so; but I find in Gill the proverb, "A bird in the bag is worth two on the snag." Dryden has *swop* and *to rights*. *Trail*: Hakluyt has "many ways *traled* by the wilde beastes."

I subjoin a few phrases not in Mr. Bartlett's book which I have heard. *Bald-headed*: "to go it bald-headed"; in great haste, as where one rushes out without his hat. *Bogue*: "I don't git much done 'thout I *bogue* right in along 'th my men." *Carry*: a *portage*. *Cat-nap*: a short doze. *Cat-stick*: a small stick. *Chowder-head*: a muddle-brain. *Cling-john*: a soft cake of rye. *Cocoa-nut*: the head. *Cohees*': applied to the people of certain settlements in Western Pennsylvania, from their use of the archaic form *Quo' he*. *Dunnow's I know*: the nearest your true Yankee ever comes to acknowledging ignorance. *Essence-pedler*: a skunk. *First-rate and a half*. *Fish-flakes*, for drying fish: O. E. *fleck* (*cratis*). *Gander-party*: a social gathering of men only. *Gawnicus*: a dolt. *Hawkins's whetstone*: rum; in derision of

one Hawkins, a well-known temperance-lecturer. *Hyper*: to bustle: "I mus' *hyper* about an' git tea." *Keeler-tub*: one in which dishes are washed. ("And Greasy Joan doth *keel* the pot.") *Laptea*: where the guests are too many to sit at table. *Last of pea-time*: to be hard up. *Löse-laid* (loose-laid): a weaver's term, and probably English; weak-willed. *Malahack*: to cut up hastily or awkwardly. *Moonglade*: a beautiful word for the track of moonlight on the water. *Off-ox*: an unmanageable, cross-grained fellow. *Old Driver*, *Old Splitfoot*; the Devil. *Onhitch*: to pull trigger (cf Spanish *disparar*). *Popular*: conceited. *Rote*: sound of surf before a storm. *Kot-gut*: cheap whiskey; the word occurs in Heywood's "English Traveller" and Addison's "Drummer," for a poor kind of drink. *Seem*: it is habitual with the New-Englander to put this verb to strange uses, as, "I can't *seem* to be suited," "I could n't *seem* to know him." *Sidchill*, for *hillside*. *State-house*: this seems an Americanism, whether invented or derived from the Dutch *Stadhuis*, I know not. *Strike* and *string*: from the game of nine-pins; to make a *strike* is to knock down all the pins with one ball, hence it has come to mean fortunate, successful. *Swampers*: men who break out roads for lumberers. *Tormented*: euphemism for damned, as, "not a tormented cent." *Virginia fence*. *to make a*: to walk like a drunken man.

It is always worth while to note down the erratic words or phrases which one meets with in any dialect. They may throw light on the meaning of other words, on the relationship of languages, or even on history itself. In so composite a language as ours they often supply a different form to express a different shade of meaning as in *viol* and *fiddle*, *thrid* and *thread*, *smother* and *smoulder*, where the *l* has crept in by a false analogy with *would*. We have given back to England the excellent adjective *lengthy*, formed honestly like *earthy*, *drouthy*, and others,

thus enabling their journalists to characterize our President's messages by a word civilly compromising between *long* and *tedious*, so as not to endanger the peace of the two countries by wounding our national sensitiveness to British criticism. Let me give two curious examples of the antiseptic property of dialects at which I have already glanced. Dante has *dindi* as a childish or low word for *danari* (money), and in Shropshire small Roman coins are still dug up which the peasants call *dinders*. This can hardly be a chance coincidence, but seems rather to carry the word back to the Roman soldiery. So our farmers say *chuk, chuk*, to their pigs, and *ciacco* is one of the Italian words for *hog*. When a countryman tells us that he "fell *all of a heap*," I cannot help thinking that he unconsciously points to an affinity between our word *tumble*, and the Latin *tumulus*, that is older than most others. I believe that words, or even the mere intonation of them, have an astonishing vitality and power of propagation by the root, like the gardener's pest, quitch-grass,* while the application or combination of them may be new. It is in these last that my countrymen seem to me full of humor, invention, quickness of wit, and that sense of subtle analogy which needs only refining to become fancy and imagination. Prosaic as American life seems in many of its aspects to a European, bleak and bare as it is on the side of tradition, and utterly orphaned of the solemn inspiration of antiquity, I cannot help thinking that the ordinary talk of unlettered men among us is fuller of metaphor and of phrases that suggest lively images than that of any other people I have seen. Very many such will be found in Mr. Bartlett's book, though his short list of proverbs at the end seem to me, with one or two exceptions, as un-American as possible. Most of them have no

character at all but coarseness, and are quite too long-skirted for working proverbs, in which language always "takes off its coat to it," as a Yankee would say. There are plenty that have a more native and puckery flavor, seedlings from the old stock often, and yet new varieties. One hears such not seldom among us Easterners, and the West would yield many more. "Mean enough to steal acorns from a blind hog"; "Cold as the north side of a Jenooary gravestone by starlight"; "Hungry as a graven image"; "Pop'lar as a hen with one chicken"; "Quicker 'n greased lightnin'"; "Ther 's sech a thing ez bein' *tu*"; "Stingy enough to skim his milk at both eends"; "Hot as the Devil's kitchen"; "Handy as a pocket in a shirt"; "He 's a whole team and the dog under the wagon"; "All deacons are good, but there 's odds in deacons" (to *deacon* berries is to put the largest atop); "So thievish they hev to take in their stone walls nights"; * may serve as specimens. "I take my tea *barfoot*," said a backwoodsman when asked if he would have cream and sugar. (I find *barfoot*, by the way, in the Coventry Plays.) A man speaking to me once of a very rocky clearing said, "Stone 's got a pretty heavy mortgage on that land," and I overheard a guide in the woods say to his companions who were urging him to sing, "Wal, I *did* sing once, but toons gut invented, an' thet spilt my trade." Whoever has driven over a stream by a bridge made of *slabs* will feel the picturesque force of the epithet *slab-bridged* applied to a fellow of shaky character. Almost every county has some good die-sinker in phrase, whose mintage passes into the currency of the whole neighborhood. Such a one described the county jail (the one stone building where all the dwellings are of wood) as "the house whose underpinnin' come up to the eaves," and

* Which, whether in that form, or under its aliases *witch-grass* and *cooch-grass*, prints us back to its original Saxon *quick*.

* And, by the way, the Yankee never says "o' nights," but uses the older adverbial form, analogous to the German *nachts*.

called hell "the place where they did n't rake up their fires nights." I once asked a stage-driver if the other side of a hill were as steep as the one we were climbing: "Steep? chain-lightnin' could n' go down it 'thout puttin' the shoe on!" And this brings me back to the exaggeration of which I spoke before. To me there is something very taking in the negro "so black that charcoal made a chalk-mark on him," and the wooden shingle "painted so like marble that it sank in water," as if its very consciousness or its vanity had been over-persuaded by the cunning of the painter. I heard a man, in order to give a notion of some very cold weather, say to another that a certain Joe, who had been taking mercury, found a lump of quicksilver in each boot, when he went home to dinner. This power of rapidly dramatizing a dry fact into flesh and blood, and the vivid conception of Joe as a human thermometer, strike me as showing a poetic sense that may be refined into faculty. At any rate there is humor here, and not mere quickness of wit, — the deeper and not the shallower quality. The *tendency* of humor is always towards overplus of expression, while the very essence of wit is its logical precision. Captain Basil Hall denied that our people had any humor, deceived, perhaps, by their gravity of manner. But this very seriousness is often the outward sign of that humorous quality of the mind which delights in finding an element of identity in things seemingly the most incongruous, and then again in forcing an incongruity upon things identical. Perhaps Captain Hall had no humor himself, and if so he would never find it. Did he always feel the point of what was said to himself? I doubt it, because I happen to know a chance he once had given him in vain. The Captain was walking up and down the veranda of a country tavern in Massachusetts while the coach changed horses. A thunder-storm was going on, and, with that pleasant European air of indirect self-compliment in condescending to be

surprised by American merit, which we find so conciliating, he said to a countryman lounging against the door, "Pretty heavy thunder you have here." The other, who had divined at a glance his feeling of generous concession to a new country, drawled gravely, "Waal, we *du*, considerin' the number of inhabitants." This, the more I analyze it, the more humorous does it seem. The same man was capable of wit also, when he would. He was a cabinet-maker, and was once employed to make some commandment-tables for the parish meeting-house. The parson, a very old man, annoyed him by looking into his workshop every morning, and cautioning him to be very sure to pick out "clear mahogany without any *knots* in it." At last, wearied out, he retorted one day: "Wal, Dr. B., I guess ef I was to leave the *nots* out o' some o' the c'man'ments, 't'ould soot you full ez wal!"

If I had taken the pains to write down the proverbial or pithy phrases I have heard, or if I had sooner thought of noting the Yankeeisms I met with in my reading, I might have been able to do more justice to my theme. But I have done all I wished in respect to pronunciation, if I have proved that where we are vulgar, we have the countenance of very good company. For, as to the *jus et norma loquendi*. I agree with Horace and those who have paraphrased or commented him, from Boileau to Gray. I think that a good rule for style is Galiani's definition of sublime oratory, — "l'art de tout dire sans être mis à la Bastille dans un pays où il est défendu de rien dire." I profess myself a fanatical purist, but with a hearty contempt for the speech-gilders who affect purism without any thorough, or even pedagogic, knowledge of the engendure, growth, and affinities of the noble language about whose *mésalliances* they profess (like Dean Alford) to be so solicitous. If they had their way —! "Doch es sey," says Lessing, "dass jene gothische Höflichkeit eine unentbehrliche Tugend des heutigen Umganges ist. Soll sie darum

unsere Schriften eben so schaal und falsch machen als unsern Umgang?" And Drayton was not far wrong in affirming that

"T is possible to climb,
To kindle, or to slake,
Although in Skelton's rhyme."

Cumberland in his Memoirs tells us that when, in the midst of Admiral Rodney's great sea-fight, Sir Charles Douglas said to him, "Behold, Sir George, the Greeks and Trojans contending for the body of Patroclus!" the Admiral answered, peevishly, "Damn the Greeks and damn the Trojans! I have other things to think of." After the battle was won, Rodney thus to Sir Charles, "Now, my dear friend, I am at the service of your Greeks and Trojans, and the whole of Homer's Iliad, or as much of it as you please!" I had some such feeling of the impertinence of our pseudo-classicality when I chose our homely dialect to work in. Should we be nothing, because somebody had contrived to be something (and that perhaps in a provincial dialect) ages ago? and to be nothing by our very attempt to be that something which they had already been, and which therefore nobody could be again without being a bore? Is there no way left, then, I thought, of being natural, of being *naïf*, which means nothing more than native, of belonging to the age and country in which you are born? The Yankee, at least, is a new phenomenon; let us try to be *that*. It is perhaps a *pis aller*, but is not *No Thoroughfare* written up everywhere else? In the literary world, things seemed to me very much as they were in the latter half of the last century. Pope, skimming the cream of good sense and expression wherever he could find it, had made, not exactly poetry, but an honest, salable butter of worldly wisdom which pleasantly lubricated some of the drier morsels of life's daily bread, and seeing this, scores of harmlessly insane people went on for the next fifty years coaxing his butter-milk with the regular up and down of

the pentameter churn. And in our day do we not scent everywhere, and even carry away in our clothes against our will, that faint perfume of musk which Mr. Tennyson has left behind him, or worse, of Heine's *pachouli*? And might it not be possible to escape them by turning into one of our narrow New England lanes, shut in though it were by bleak stone walls on either hand, and where no better flowers were to be gathered than golden-rod and hard-hack?

Beside the advantage of getting out of the beaten track, our dialect offered others hardly inferior. As I was about to make an endeavor to state them, I remembered something which the clear-sighted Goethe had said about Hebel's *Ailemannische Gedichte*, which, making proper deduction for special reference to the book under review, expresses what I would have said far better than I could hope to do: "Allen diesen innern guten Eigenschaften kommt die behagliche naive Sprache sehr zu staten. Man findet mehrere sinnlich bedeutende und wohlklingende Worte . . . von einem, zwei Buchstaben, viele kurze, leichte Sylben, neue Reime, welches, mehr als man glaubt, ein Vortheil für den Dichter ist. Diese Elemente werden durch glückliche Constructionen und lebhafte Formen zu einem Styl zusammengedrängt der zu diesem Zwecke vor unserer Büchersprache grosse Vorzüge hat." Of course I do not mean to imply that I have come near achieving any such success as the great critic here indicates, but I think the success is *there*, and to be plucked by some more fortunate hand.

Nevertheless, I was encouraged by the approval of many whose opinions I valued. With a feeling too tender and grateful to be mixed with any vanity, I mention as one of these the late A. H. Clough, who, more than any one of those I have known (no longer living), except Hawthorne, impressed me with the constant presence of that indefinable thing we call genius. He often

suggested that I should try my hand at some Yankee Pastorals, which would admit of more sentiment and a higher tone without foregoing the advantage offered by the dialect. I have never completed anything of the kind, but, in this Second Series, both my remembrance of his counsel and the deeper feeling called up by the great interests at stake, led me to venture some passages nearer to what is called poetical than could have been admitted without incongruity into the former series. The time seemed calling to me, with the old poet, —

“Leave, then, your wonted prattle,
The oaten reed forbear;
For I hear a sound of battle,
And trumpets rend the air !”

The only attempt I had ever made at anything like a pastoral (if that may be called an attempt which was the result almost of pure accident) was in “The Courtin’.” While the introduction to the First Series was going through the press, I received word from the printer that there was a blank page left which must be filled. I sat down at once and improvised another fictitious “notice of the press,” in which, because verse would fill up space more cheaply than prose, I inserted an extract from a supposed ballad of Mr. Biglow. I kept no copy of it, and the printer, as directed, cut it off when the gap was filled. Presently I began to receive letters asking for the rest of it, sometimes for the *balance* of it. I had none, but to answer such demands, I patched a conclusion upon it in a later edition. Those who had only the first continued to importune me. Afterward, being asked to write it out as an autograph for the Baltimore Sanitary Commission Fair, I added other verses, into some of which I infused a little more sentiment in a homely way, and after a fashion completed it by sketching in the characters and making a connected story. Most likely I have spoiled it, but I shall put it at the end of this Introduction, to answer once for all those kindly importunings.

As I have seen extracts from what

purported to be writings of Mr. Biglow, which were not genuine, I may properly take this opportunity to say, that the two volumes now published contain every line I ever printed under that pseudonyme, and that I have never, so far as I can remember, written an anonymous article (elsewhere than in the *North American Review*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*, during my editorship of it) except a review of Mrs. Stowe’s “Minister’s Wooing,” and, some twenty years ago, a sketch of the anti-slavery movement in America for an English journal.

A word more on pronunciation. I have endeavored to express this so far as I could by the types, taking such pains as, I fear, may sometimes make the reading harder than need be. At the same time, by studying uniformity I have sometimes been obliged to sacrifice minute exactness. The emphasis often modifies the habitual sound. For example, *for* is commonly *fer* (a shorter sound than *fur* for *far*), but when emphatic it always becomes *for*, as “wut *for*?” So *too* is pronounced like *to* (as it was anciently spelt), and *to* like *ta* (the sound as in the *tau* of *touch*), but *too*, when emphatic, changes into *tue*, and *to*, sometimes, in similar cases, into *toe*, as, “I did n’ hardly know wut *toe* du!” Where vowels come together, or one precedes another following an aspirate, the two melt together, as was common with the older poets who formed their versification on French or Italian models. Drayton is thoroughly Yankee when he says “I ’xpect,” and Pope when he says “t’ inspire.” *With* becomes sometimes *’ith*, *’üth*, or *’th*, or even disappears wholly where it comes before *the*, as, “I went along th’ Square” (along with the Squire), the *are* sound being an archaism which I have noticed also in *choir*, like the old Scottish *quhair*. (Herrick has, “Of flowers ne’er sucked by th’ theeving bee.”) *Without* becomes *athout* and *’thout*. *Afterwards* always retains its locative *s*, and is pronounced always *ahter-wurds’*, with a strong accent on the last

syllable. This oddity has some support in the erratic *towards'* instead of *to'wards*, which we find in the poets and sometimes hear. The sound given to the first syllable of *to'wards*, I may remark, sustains the Yankee lengthening of the *o* in *to*. At the beginning of a sentence, *ahterwurds* has the accent on the first syllable; at the end of one, on the last; as *ah'terwurds* he tol' me," "he tol' me *ahterwurds'*." The Yankee never makes a mistake in his aspirates. *U* changes in many words to *e*, always in *such*, *brush*, *tush*, *hush*, *rush*, *blush*, seldom in *much*, oftener in *trust* and *crust*, never in *nush*, *gush*, *bust*, *tumble*, or (?) *flush*, in the latter case probably to avoid confusion with *flesh*. I have heard *flush* with the *ě* sound, however. For the same reason, I suspect, never in *gush* (at least, I never heard it), because we have already one *gesh* for *gash*. *A* and *i* short frequently become *e* short. *U* always becomes *o* in the prefix *un* (except *unto*), and *o* in return changes to *u* short in *uv* for *of*, and in some words beginning with *om*. *T* and *d*, *b* and *β*, *v* and *w*, remain intact. So much occurs to me in addition to what I said on this head in the preface to the former volume.

Of course in what I have said I wish to be understood as keeping in mind the difference between provincialisms properly so called and *slang*. *Slang* is always vulgar, because it is not a natural but an affected way of talking, and all mere tricks of speech or writing are offensive. I do not think that Mr. Biglow can be fairly charged with vulgarity, and I should have entirely failed in my design, if I have not made it appear that high and even refined sentiment may coexist with the shrewder and more comic elements of the Yankee character. I believe that what is essentially vulgar and mean-spirited in politics seldom has its source in the body of the people, but much rather among those who are made timid by their wealth or selfish by their love of power. A democracy can afford much better than an aristocracy to follow out its

convictions, and is perhaps better justified to build those convictions on plain principles of right and wrong, rather than on the shifting sands of expediency. I had always thought "Sam Slick" a libel on the Yankee character, and a complete falsification of Yankee modes of speech, though, for aught I know, it may be true in both respects so far as the British Provinces are concerned. To me the dialect was native, was spoken all about me when a boy, at a time when an Irish day-laborer was as rare as an American one now. Since then I have made a study of it so far as opportunity allowed. But when I write in it, it is as in a mother tongue, and I am carried back far beyond any studies of it to long-ago noonings in my father's hay-fields, and to the talk of Sam and Job over their jug of *blackstrap* under the shadow of the ash-tree which still dapples the grass whence they have been gone so long.

But life is short, and prefaces should be. And so, my good friends, to whom this introductory epistle is addressed, farewell. Though some of you have remonstrated with me, I shall never write any more "Biglow Papers," however great the temptation, — great especially at the present time, — unless it be to complete the original plan of this Series by bringing out Mr. Sawin as an "original Union man." The very favor with which they have been received is a hindrance to me, by forcing on me a self-consciousness from which I was entirely free when I wrote the First Series. Moreover, I am no longer the same careless youth, with nothing to do but live to myself, my books, and my friends, that I was then. I always hated politics, in the ordinary sense of the word, and I am not likely to grow fonder of them, now that I have learned how rare it is to find a man who can keep principle clear from party and personal prejudice, or can conceive the possibility of another's doing so. I feel as if I could in some sort claim to be an *emeritus*, and I am sure that political satire will have full justice done it by that genuine and delightful hu-

morist, the Rev. Petroleum V. Nasby. I regret that I killed off Mr. Wilbur so soon, for he would have enabled me to bring into this preface a number of learned quotations, which must now go a-begging, and also enabled me to dis-personalize myself into a vicarious egotism. He would have helped me also in clearing myself from a charge which I shall briefly touch on, because my friend Mr. Hughes has found it needful to defend me in his preface to one of the English editions of the "Biglow Papers." I thank Mr. Hughes heartily for his friendly care of my good name, and were his Preface accessible to my readers here (as I am glad it is not, for its partiality makes me blush), I should leave the matter where he left it. The charge is of profanity, brought in by persons who proclaimed African slavery of Divine institution, and is based (so far as I have heard) on two passages in the First Series, —

"An' you've gut to git up airly.
Ef you want to take in God,"

and,

"God'll send the bill to you,"

and on some Scriptural illustrations by Mr. Sawin.

Now, in the first place, I was writing under an assumed character and must talk as the person would whose mouthpiece I made myself. Will any one familiar with the New England countryman venture to tell me that he does *not* speak of sacred things familiarly? That Biblical allusions (allusions, that is, to the single book with whose language, from his church-going habits, he is intimate) are *not* frequent on his lips? If so, he cannot have pursued his studies of the character on so many long-ago muster-fields and at so many cattle-shows as I. But I scorn any such line of defence, and will confess at once that one of the things I am proud of in my countrymen is (I am not speaking now of such persons as I have assumed Mr. Sawin to be) that they do not put their Maker away far from them, or interpret the fear of God into being afraid of Him. The Tal-

mudists had conceived a deep truth when they said, that "all things were in the power of God, save the fear of God"; and when people stand in great dread of an invisible power, I suspect they mistake quite another personage for the Deity. I might justify myself for the passages criticised by many parallel ones from Scripture, but I need not. The Reverend Homer Wilbur's note-books supply me with three apposite quotations. The first is from a Father of the Roman Church, the second from a Father of the Anglican, and the third from a Father of Modern English poetry. The Puritan divines would furnish me with many more such. St. Bernard says, *Sapiens nummularius est Deus: nummum fictum non recipiet*; "A cunning money-changer is God: he will take in no base coin." Latimer says, "You shall perceive that God, by this example, shaketh us by the noses and taketh us by the ears." Familiar enough, both of them, one would say! But I should think Mr. Biglow had verily stolen the last of the two maligned passages from Dryden's "Don Sebastian," where I find

"And beg of Heaven to charge the bill on me!"

And there I leave the matter, being willing to believe that the Saint, the Martyr, and even the Poet, were as careful of God's honor as my critics are ever likely to be.

J. R. L.

THE COURTIN'.

God makes sech nights, all white an'
still

Fur 'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'Ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in —

There warn't no stoves (tell comfort
died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm thet gran'ther
Young
Fetched back from Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'T was kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clean grit an' human natur';
None could n't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He 'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
Hed squired 'em, danced 'em, druv
'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells —
All is, he could n't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she 'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upon it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
' She seemed to 've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he 'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper, —
All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat,
Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furrer,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

" You want to see my Pa, I s'pose? "
" Wal . . . no . . . I come da-
signin' " —

" To see my Ma? She 's sprinklin'
clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin' . "

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin' ;
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He could n't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, " I 'd better call agin " ;
Says she, " Think likely, Mister " ;
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose natures never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt
glued
Too tight for all expressin',
'Tell mother see how metters stood,
And gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

THE BIGLOW PAPERS.

No. I.

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ.,
TO MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

LETTER FROM THE REVEREND HOMER
WILBUR, M. A., ENCLOSING THE EPIS-
TLE AFORESAID.

JAALAM, 15th Nov., 1861.

* * * * *

IT is not from any idle wish to obtrude my humble person with undue prominence upon the publick view that I resume my pen upon the present occasion. *Juniores ad labores*. But having been a main instrument in rescuing the talent of my young parishioner from being buried in the ground, by giving it such warrant with the world as could be derived from a name already widely known by several printed discourses (all of which I may be permitted without immodesty to state have been deemed worthy of preservation in the Library of Harvard College by my esteemed friend Mr. Sibley), it seemed becoming that I should not only testify to the genuineness of the following production, but call attention to it, the more as Mr. Biglow had so long been silent as to be in danger of absolute oblivion. I insinuate no claim to any share in the authorship (*vix ea nostra voco*) of the works already published by Mr. Biglow, but merely take to myself the credit of having fulfilled toward them the office of taster (*experto crede*), who, having first tried, could afterward bear witness (*credenzen* it was aptly named by the Germans), an office always arduous,

and sometimes even dangerous, as in the case of those devoted persons who venture their lives in the deglutition of patent medicines (*dolus latet in generalibus*, there is deceit in the most of them) and thereafter are wonderfully preserved long enough to append their signatures to testimonials in the diurnal and hebdomadal prints. I say not this as covertly glancing at the authors of certain manuscripts which have been submitted to my literary judgment (though an epick in twenty-four books on the "Taking of Jericho" might, save for the prudent forethought of Mrs. Wilbur in secreting the same just as I had arrived beneath the walls and was beginning a catalogue of the various horns and their blowers, too ambitiously emulous in longanimity of Homer's list of ships, might, I say, have rendered frustrate any hope I could entertain *vacare Musis* for the small remainder of my days), but only the further to secure myself against any imputation of unseemly forthputting. I will barely subjoin, in this connexion, that, whereas Job was left to desire, in the soreness of his heart, that his adversary had written a book, as perchance misanthropically wishing to indite a review thereof, yet was not Satan allowed so far to tempt him as to send Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar each with an unprinted work in his wallet to be submitted to his censure. But of this enough. Were I in need of other excuse, I might add that I write by the express desire of Mr. Biglow himself, whose entire winter leisure is occupied, as he assures me, in answering demands for autographs,

a labor exacting enough in itself, and egregiously so to him, who, being no ready penman, cannot sign so much as his name without strange contortions of the face (his nose, even, being essential to complete success) and painfully suppressed Saint-Vitus-dance of every muscle in his body. This, with his having been put in the Commission of the Peace by our excellent Governor (*O, si sic omnes!*) immediately on his accession to office, keeps him continually employed. *Haud inexpertus loquor*, having for many years written myself J. P., and being not seldom applied to for specimens of my chirography, a request to which I have sometimes over weakly assented, believing as I do that nothing written of set purpose can properly be called an autograph, but only those unpremeditated sallies and lively runnings which betray the fireside Man instead of the hunted Notoriety doubling on his pursuers. But it is time that I should bethink me of St. Austin's prayer, *libera me a meipso*, if I would arrive at the matter in hand.

Moreover, I had yet another reason for taking up the pen myself. I am informed that the *Atlantic Monthly* is mainly indebted for its success to the contributions and editorial supervision of Dr. Holmes, whose excellent "Annals of America" occupy an honored place upon my shelves. The journal itself I have never seen; but if this be so, it might seem that the recommendation of a brother-clergyman (though *par magis quam similis*) should carry a greater weight. I suppose that you have a department for historical lucubrations, and should be glad, if deemed desirable, to forward for publication my "Collections for the Antiquities of Jaalam," and my (now happily complete) pedigree of the Wilbur family from its *fons et origo*, the Wild Boar of Ardennes. Withdrawn from the active duties of my profession by the settlement of a colleague-pastor, the Reverend Jeduthun Hitchcock, formerly of Brutus Four-Corners, I might find time for further contributions to gen-

eral literature on similar topics. I have made large advances towards a completer genealogy of Mrs. Wilbur's family, the Pilcoxes, not, if I know myself, from any idle vanity, but with the sole desire of rendering myself useful in my day and generation. *Nulla dies sine linea*. I inclose a meteorological register, a list of the births, deaths, and marriages, and a few *memorabilia* of longevity in Jaalam East Parish for the last half-century. Though spared to the unusual period of more than eighty years, I find no diminution of my faculties or abatement of my natural vigor, except a scarcely sensible decay of memory and a necessity of recurring to younger eyesight or spectacles for the finer print in Cruden. It would gratify me to make some further provision for declining years from the emoluments of my literary labors. I had intended to effect an insurance on my life, but was deterred therefrom by a circular from one of the offices, in which the sudden death of so large a proportion of the insured was set forth as an inducement, that it seemed to me little less than a tempting of Providence. *Neque in summa inopia levis esse senectus potest, ne sapienti quidem*.

Thus far concerning Mr. Biglow; and so much seemed needful (*brevis esse laboro*) by way of preliminary, after a silence of fourteen years. He greatly fears lest he may in this essay have fallen below himself, well knowing that, if exercise be dangerous on a full stomach, no less so is writing on a full reputation. Beset as he has been on all sides, he could not refrain, and would only imprecate patience till he shall again have "got the hang" (as he calls it) of an accomplishment long disused. The letter of Mr. Sawin was received some time in last June, and others have followed which will in due season be submitted to the publick. How largely his statements are to be depended on, I more than merely dubitate. He was always distinguished for a tendency to exaggeration, — it might almost be qualified by a stronger term. *Fortiter*

mentire, aliquid hæret, seemed to be his favourite rule of rhetorick. That he is actually where he says he is the postmark would seem to confirm; that he was received with the publick demonstrations he describes would appear consonant with what we know of the habits of those regions; but further than this I venture not to decide. I have sometimes suspected a vein of humour in him which leads him to speak by contraries; but since, in the unrestrained intercourse of private life, I have never observed in him any striking powers of invention, I am the more willing to put a certain qualified faith in the incidents and the details of life and manners which give to his narratives some portion of the interest and entertainment which characterizes a Century Sermon.

It may be expected of me that I should say something to justify myself with the world for a seeming inconsistency with my well-known principles in allowing my youngest son to raise a company for the war, a fact known to all through the medium of the publick prints. I did reason with the young man, but *expellas naturam furcæ, tamenusque recurrit*. Having myself been a chaplain in 1812, I could the less wonder that a man of war had sprung from my loins. It was, indeed, grievous to send my Benjamin, the child of my old age; but after the discomfiture of Manassas, I with my own hands did buckle on his armour, trusting in the great Comforter and Commander for strength according to my need. For truly the memory of a brave son dead in his shroud were a greater staff of my declining years than a living coward (if those may be said to have lived who carry all of themselves into the grave with them), though his days might be long in the land, and he should get much goods. It is not till our earthen vessels are broken that we find and truly possess the treasure that was laid up in them. *Migravi in animam meam*, I have sought refuge in my own soul; nor would I be shamed by the heathen comedian with his *Ne-*

quam illud verbum, bene vult, nisi bene facit. During our dark days, I read constantly in the inspired book of Job, which I believe to contain more food to maintain the fibre of the soul for right living and high thinking than all pagan literature together, though I would by no means vilipend the study of the classicks. There I read that Job said in his despair, even as the fool saith in his heart there is no God, — “The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure.” (*Job* xii. 6.) But I sought farther till I found this Scripture also, which I would have those perpend who have striven to turn our Israel aside to the worship of strange gods: — “If I did despise the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant when they contended with me, what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?” (*Job* xxxi. 13, 14.) On this text I preached a discourse on the last day of Fasting and Humiliation with general acceptance, though there were not wanting one or two Laodiceans who said that I should have waited till the President announced his policy. But let us hope and pray, remembering this of Saint Gregory, *Vult Deus rogari, vult cogi, vult quâdam importunitate vinci*.

We had our first fall of snow on Friday last. Frosts have been unusually backward this fall. A singular circumstance occurred in this town on the 20th October, in the family of Deacon Pelatiah Tinkham. On the previous evening, a few moments before family-prayers,

* * * * *

[The editors of the *Atlantic* find it necessary here to cut short the letter of their valued correspondent, which seemed calculated rather on the rates of longevity in Jaalam than for less favoured localities. They have every encouragement to hope that he will write again.]

With esteem and respect.

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR. A. M.

It 's some consid'ble of a spell sence
 I hain't writ no letters,
 An' ther' 's gret changes hez took
 place in all polit'cle metters :
 Some canderdates air dead an' gone,
 an' some hez ben defeated,
 Which 'mounts to pooty much the
 same ; fer it 's ben proved repeated
 A betch o' bread thet hain't riz once
 ain't goin' to rise agin,
 An' it 's jest money throwed away to
 put the emptins in :
 But thet 's wut folks wun't never larn ;
 they dunno how to go,
 Arter you want their room, no more 'n
 a bullet-headed bean ;
 Ther' 's ollers chaps a-hangin' roun'
 thet can't see peatime 's past,
 Mis'ble as roosters in a rain, heads
 down an' tails half-mast :
 It ain't disgraceful bein' beat, when a
 holl nation doos it,
 But Chance is like an amberill,— it
 don't take twice to lose it.

I spose you 're kin' o' cur'ous, now, to
 know why I hain't writ.
 Wal, I 've ben where a litt'ry taste
 don't somehow seem to git
 Th' encouragement a feller 'd think,
 thet 's used to public schools,
 An' where sech things ez paper 'n' ink
 air clean agin the rules :
 A kind o' vicyvarsy house, built dreffle
 strong an' stout,
 So 's 't honest people can't get in, ner
 t'other sort git out,
 An' with the winders so contrived,
 you 'd prob'ly like the view
 Better alookin' in than out, though it
 seems sing'lar, tu ;
 But then the landlord sets by ye, can't
 bear ye out o' sight,
 And locks ye up ez reg'lar ez an out-
 side door at night.

This world is awfle contrary : the rope
 may stretch your neck
 Thet mebbly kep' another chap frum
 washin' off a wreck ;
 An' you may see the taters grow in
 one poor feller's patch,

So small no self-respectin' hen thet
 valleded time 'ould scratch,
 So small the rot can't find 'em out, an'
 then agin, nex' door,
 Ez big ez wut hogs dream on when
 they 're 'most too fat to snore.
 But groutin' ain't no kin' o' use ; an' ef
 the fust throw fails,
 Why, up an' try agin, thet 's all,— the
 coppers ain't all tails ;
 Though I hev seen 'em when I thought
 they hed n't no more head
 Than 'd sarve a nussin' Brigadier thet
 gits some ink to shed.

When I writ last, I 'd ben turned
 loose by thet blamed nigger, Pomp,
 Ferlorner than a musquash, ef you 'd
 took an' dreened his swamp :
 But I ain't o' the meechin' kind, thet
 sets an' thinks fer weeks
 The bottom 's out o' th' univarse coz
 their own gillpot leaks.
 I hed to cross bayous an' criks, (wal, it
 did beat all natur',)
 Upon a kin' o' corderoy, fust log, then
 alligator :
 Luck'ly, the critters warn't sharp-sot ;
 I guess 't wuz overruled
 They 'd done their mornin's marketin'
 an' gut their hunger cooled ;
 Fer missionaries to the Creeks an' run-
 aways are viewed
 By them an' folks ez sent express to be
 their reg'lar food :
 Wutever 't wuz, they laid an' snoozed
 ez peacefully ez sinners,
 Meek ez disgestin' deacons be at ordi-
 nation dinners ;
 Ef any on 'em turned an' snapped, I
 let 'em kin' o' taste
 My live-oak leg, an' so, ye see, ther'
 warn't no gret o' waste ;
 Fer they found out in quicker time than
 ef they 'd ben to college
 'T warn't heartier food than though 't
 wuz made out o' the tree o' knowl-
 edge.
 But I tell *you* my other leg hed larned
 wut pizon-nettle meant,
 An' var'ous other usefle things, afore I
 reached a settlement,
 An' all o' me thet wuz n't sore an'
 sendin' prickles thru me

Wuz jest the leg I parted with in lickin'
Montezumy:

A usefule limb it 's ben to me, an' more
of a support
Than wut the other hez ben, - coz I
dror my pension for 't.

Wal, I gut in at last where folks wuz
civerlized an' white,

Ez I diskivered to my cost afore
't warn't hardly night;

Fer 'z I wuz settin' in the bar a-takin'
sunthin' hot,

An' feelin' like a man agin, all over in
one spot,

A feller thet sot opposite, arter a squint
at me,

Lep up an' drawed his peacemaker,
an', "Dash it, Sir," suz he,

"I 'm doubledashed ef you ain't him
thet stole my yaller chettle,

(You 're all the stränger thet 's around,)
so now you 've gut to settle;

It ain't no use to argerfy ner try to cut
up frisky,

I know ye ez I know the smell of ole
chain lightnin' whiskey;

We 're lor-abidin' folks down here,
we 'll fix ye so 's 't a bar

Would n' tech ye with a ten-foot pole;
(Jedge, you jest warm the tar:)

You 'll think you 'd better ha' gut among
a tribe o' Mongrel Tartars,

'Fore we 've done showin' how we raise
our Southun prize tar-martyrs;

A moultin' fallen cherubim, ef he
should see ye, 'd snicker,

Thinkin' he warn't a suckemstance.
Come, genlemun, le' 's liquor:

An', Gin'ral, when you 've mixed the
drinks an' chalked 'em up, tote
roun'

An' see ef ther' 's a feather-bed (thet 's
borryable) in town.

We 'll try ye fair, old Grafted-Leg, an'
ef the tar wun't stick,

Th' ain't not a juror here but wut 'll
'quit ye double-quick."

To cut it short, I wun't say sweet, they
gi' me a good dip,

(They ain't *perfessin'* Bahptists here,)
then give the bed a rip, —

The jury 'd sot, an' quicker 'n a flash
they hetched me out, a livin'

Extemp'ry mammoth turkey-chick fer
a Fejee Thanksgiving'.

Thet I felt some stuck up is wut it 's
nat'ral to suppose,

When poppylar enthusiasn hed fun-
nished me sech clo'es;

(Ner 't ain't without edvantiges, this
kin' o' suit, ye see,

It 's water-proof, an' water 's wut I like
kep' out o' me;)

But nut content with thet, they took a
kerridge from the fence

An' rid me roun' to see the place, en-
tirely free 'f expense,

With forty-'leven new kines o' sarse
without no charge acquainted me,

Gi' me three cheers, an' vowed thet I
wuz all their fahncy painted me;

They treated me to all their eggs;
(they keep 'em I should think,

Fer sech ovations, pooty long, for they
wuz mos' distinc';)

They starred me thick 'z the Milky-
Way with indiscrim'nit cherity,

Fer wut we call reception eggs air sun-
thin' of a reerity;

Green ones is plentifule anough, skurce
wuth a nigger's getherin',

But your dead-ripe ones ranges high fer
treatin' Nothun bretherin';

A spotteder, ringstreakeder child the'
warn't in Uncle Sam's

Holl farm, — a cross of stripëd pig an'
one o' Jacob's lambs;

'T wuz Dannil in the lions' den, new
an' enlarged edition,

An' everythin' fust-rate o' 'ts kind, the'
warn't no impersition.

People 's impulsiver down here than
wut our folks to home be,

An' kin' o' go it 'ith a resh in raisin'
Hail Columby:

Thet 's so: an' they swarmed out like
bees, for your real Southun men's

Time is n't o' much more account than
an ole settin' hen's;

(They jest work semioccashnally, or
else don't work at all,

An' so their time an' 'tention both air
at saci'ty's call.)

Talk about hospatality! wut Nothun
town d' ye know

Would take a totle stranger up an' treat
him gratis so?

You 'd better b'lieve ther' 's nothin' like
this spendin' days an' nights
Along 'ith a dependent race fer civer-
lizin' whites.

But this wuz all prelim'nary; it's so
Gran' Jurors here

Fin' a true bill, a hendier way than
ourn, an' nut so dear;

So arter this they sentenced me, to
make all tight 'n' snug,

Afore a reg'lar court o' law, to ten
years in the Jug.

I did n' make no gret defence: you
don't feel much like speakin',

When, ef you let your clamshells gape,
a quart o' tar will leak in:

I *hev* hearn tell o' winged words, but
pint o' fact it tethers

The spoutin' gift to hev your words *tu*
thick sot on with feathers,

An' Choate ner Webster would n't ha'
made an A r kin' o' speech

Astride a Southun chestnut horse shar-
per 'n a baby's screech.

Two year ago they ketched the thief,
'n' seein' I wuz innercent,

They jest uncorked an' le' me run, an'
in my stid the sinner sent

To see how *he* liked pork 'n' pone
flavored with wa'nut saplin',

An' nary social priv'ledge but a one-
hoss, starn-wheel chaplin.

When I come out, the folks behaved
mos' gen'manly an' harnsome;

They 'lowed it would n't be more 'n
right, ef I should cuss 'n' darn
some:

The Cunnle he apolergized; suz he,
"I'll du wut 's right,

I'll give ye settisfaction ncw by shootin'
ye at sight,

An' give the nigger (when he 's
caught), to pay him fer his trickin'

In gittin' the wrong man took up, a
most H fired lickin', —

It 's jest the way with all on 'em, the
inconsistent critters,

They're 'most enough to make a man
blaspheme his mornin' bitters;

I'll be your frien' thru thick an' thin
an' in all kines o' weathers,

An' all you 'll hev to pay fer 's jest the
waste o' tar an' feathers:

A lady owned the bed, ye see, a wid-
der, tu, Miss Shannon;

It wuz her mite; we would ha' took
another, ef ther 'd ben one;

We don't make *no* charge for the ride
an' all the other fixins.

Le' 's liquor; Gin'ral, you can chalk
our friend for all the mixins."

A meetin' then wuz called, where they
"RESOLVED, Thet we respect"

B. S. Esquire for quallerties o' hear-
an' intellec'

Peculiar to Columby's sile, an' not to
no one else's,

Thet makes Européan tyrans scringe
in all their gilded pel'ces,

An' doos gret honor to our race an'
Southun institootions":

(I give ye jest the substance o' the
leadin' resoolotions:)

"RESOLVED, Thet we revere in him a
soger 'thout a flor,

A martyr to the princerples o' libbaty
an' lor:

RESOLVED, Thet other nations all, ef
sot 'longside o' us,

For vartoo, larin', chivverlry, ain't
noways wuth a cuss."

They gut up a subscription, tu, but no
gret come o' *thet*;

I 'xpect in cairin' of it roun' they took
a leaky hat;

Though Southun genelmun ain't slow
at puttin' down their name,

(When they can write,) fer in the eend
it comes to jes' the same,

Because, ye see, 't 's the fashion here
to sign an' not to think

A critter 'd be so sordid ez to ax'em for
the chink:

I did n't call but jest on one, an' *he*
drawed toothpick on me,

An' reckoned he warn't goin' to stan'
no sech doggauned econ'my;

So nothin' more wuz realized, 'ceptin'
the good-will shown,

Than ef't had ben from fust to last a
reg'lar Cotton Loan.

It 's a good way, though, come to
think, coz ye enjoy the sense

O' lendin' lib'rally to the Lord, an'
nary red o' 'xpense:

Sence then I 've gut my name up *for* a
gin'rous-hearted man

By jes subscribin' right an' left on this
high-minded plan ;
I've giu away my thousands so to every
Southun sort
O' missions, colleges, an' sech, ner
ain't no poorer ior 't.

I warn't so bad off, arter all ; I need n't
hardly mention

That Guv'ment owed me quite a pile
for my arrears o' pension, —

I mean the poor, weak thing we *had* :
we run a new one now,

Thet strings a feller with a claim up ta
the nighes' bough,

An' *prectises* the rights o' man, pur-
tects down-trodden debtors,

Ner wun't hev creditors about a-
scrougin' o' their betters :

Jeff 's gut the last ideas ther' is,
poscrip', fourteenth edition,

He knows it takes some enterprise to
run an oppersition ;

Ourn 's the fust thru-by-daylight train,
with all ou'doors for deepot ;

Yourn goes so slow you 'd think 't wuz
drawed by a las' cent'ry teapot ; —

Wal, I gut all on 't paid in gold afore
our State seceded,

An' done wal, for Confed'rit bonds
warn't jest the cheese I needed :

Nut but wut they 're ez *good* ez gold,
but then it 's hard a-breakin' on 'em,

An' ignorant folks is ollers sot an'
wun't git used to takin' on 'em ;

They 're wuth ez much ez wut they wuz
afore ole Mem'nger signed 'em,

An' go off middlin' wal for drinks,
when ther' 's a knife behind 'em ;

We *du* miss silver, jes' fer thet an'
ridin' in a bus,

Now we 've shook off the desputs thet
wuz suckin' at our pus ;

An' it 's *because* the South 's so rich ;
't wuz nat'ral to expec'

Supplies o' change wuz jes' the things
we should n't recollect' ;

We 'd ough' to ha' thought aforehan',
though, o' thet good rule o' Crock-
ett's,

For 't 's tiresome cairin' cotton-bales
an' niggers in your pockets,

Ner 't ain't quite hendy to pass off one
o' your six-foot Guineas

An' git your halves an' quarters back
in gals an' pickaniunies :

Wal, 't ain't quite all a feller 'd ax, but
then ther' 's this to say,

It 's on'y jest among ourselves thet we
expec' to pay ;

Our system would ha' caird us thru in
any Bible cent'ry,

'Fore this onscripterl plan come up o'
books by double entry ;

We go the patriarkle here out o' all
sight an' hearin',

For Jacob warn't a suckemstance to
Jeff at financierin' ;

He never 'd thought o' borryin' from
Esau like all nater

An' then cornfiscatin' all debts to sech
a small pertater ;

There 's p'litickle econ'my, now, com-
bined 'ith morril beauty

Thet saycrifices privit eends (your
in'my's, tu) to dooty !

Wy, Jeff 'd ha' gin him five an' won
his eye-teeth 'fore he knowed it,

An', stid o' wastin' pottage, he 'd ha'
eat it up an' owed it.

But I wuz goin' on to say how I come
here to dwell ; —

'Nough said, thet, arter lookin' roun',
I liked the place so wal,

Where niggers doos a double good,
with us atop to stiddy 'em,

By bein' proofs o' prophecy an' suckle-
atin' medium,

Where a man 's sunthin' coz he 's
white, an' whiskey 's cheap ez fleas,

An' the financial pollercy jes' sooted my
ideas,

Thet I friz down right where I wuz,
merried the Widder Shennon,

(Her thirds wuz part in cotton-land,
part in the curse o' Canaan,)

An' here I be ez lively ez a chipmunk
on a wall,

With nothin' to feel riled about much
later 'n Eddam's fall.

Ez fur ez human foresight goes, we
made an even trade :

She gut an overseer, an' I a fem'ly
ready-made,

(The youngest on 'em 's 'mos' growed
up,) rugged an' spry ez weazles.

So 's 't ther' 's no resk o' doctors' bills
 fer hoopin'-cough an' measles.
 Our farm 's at Turkey-Buzzard Roost,
 Little Big Boosy River,
 Wal located in all respex, — fer 't ain't
 the chills 'n' fever
 Thet makes my writin' seem to squirm ;
 a Southuner 'd allow I 'd
 Some call to shake, for I 've jest hed
 to meller a new cowhide.
 Miss S. is all 'f a lady ; th' ain't no
 better on Big Boosy
 Ner one with more accomplishmunts
 'twixt here an' Tuscaloosy ;
 She 's an F. F., the tallest kind, an'
 prouder 'n the Gran' Turk,
 An' never hed a relative thet done a
 stroke o' work ;
 Hern ain't a scrimpin' fem'ly sech ez
you git up Down East,
 Th' ain't a growed member on 't but
 owes his thousuns et the least :
 She *is* some old ; but then agin ther' 's
 drawbacks in my sheer :
 Wut 's left o' me ain't more 'n enough
 to make a Brigadier :
 Wust is, thet she hez tantrums ; she 's
 like Seth Moody's gun
 (Him thet wuz nicknamed from his
 limp Ole Dot an' Kerry One) ;
 He 'd left her loaded up a spell, an' hed
 to git her clear,
 So he onhitched, — Jeerusalem ! the
 middle o' last year
 Wuz right nex' door compared to
 where she kicked the critter tu
 (Though *jest* where he brought up wuz
 wut no human never knew) ;
 His brother Asaph picked her up an'
 tied her to a tree,
 An' then she kicked an hour 'n' a half
 afore she 'd let it be :
 Wal, Miss S. *doos* hev cuttins-up an'
 pourins-out o' vials,
 But then she hez her widder's thirds,
 an' all on us hez trials.
 My objec', though, in writin' now
 warn't to allude to sech,
 But to another suckemstance more
 dellykit to tech, —
 I want thet you should grad'ly break
 my merriage to Jerushy,
 An' there 's a heap of argymunts thet 's
 emple to indooce ye :

Fust place, State's Prison, — wal, it 's
 true it warn't fer crime, o' course,
 But then it 's jest the same fer her in
 gitin' a disvorce ;
 Nex' place, my State 's secedin' out hez
 leg'ly lef' me free
 To merry any one I please, pervidin'
 it 's a she ;
 Fin'ly, I never wun't come back, she
 need n't hev no fear on 't,
 But then it 's wal to fix things right fer
 fear Miss S. should hear on 't ;
 Lastly, I 've gut religion South, an'
 Rushy she 's a pagan
 Thet sets by th' graven imiges o' the
 gret Nothun Dagon ;
 (Now I hain't seen one in six munts,
 for, sence our Treashry Loan,
 Though yaller boys is thick anough,
 eagles hez kind o' flown ;))
 An' ef J wants a stronger pint than
 them thet I hev stated,
 Wy, she 's an aliun in'my now, an'
 I 've been cornfiscated, —
 For sence we 've entered on th' estate
 o' the late nayshnul eagle,
 She hain't no kin' o' right but jes' wut
 I allow ez legle :
 Wut *doos* Secedin' mean, ef 't ain't thet
 nat'rul rights hez riz, 'n'
 Thet wut is mine 's my own, but wut 's
 another man's ain't his'n ?

Besides, I could n't do no else ; Miss
 S. suz she to me,
 "You 've sheered my bed," [thet 's
 when I paid my interduction fee
 To Southun rites,] "an' kep' your
 sheer," [wal, I allow it sticked
 So 's 't I wuz most six weeks in jail
 afore I gut me picked,]
 "Ner never paid no demmiges ; but
 thet wun't do no harm,
 Pervidin' thet you'll undertake to
 oversee the farm ;
 (My eldes' boy 's so took up, wut with
 the Ringtail Rangers
 An' settin' in the Jestice-Court for wel-
 comin' o' strangers" ;)
 [He sot on *me* ;] "an' so, ef you'll jest
 undertake the care
 Upon a mod'rit sellery, we'll up an'
 call it square ;

But ef you *can't* conclude," suz she,
an' give a kin' o' grin,
'Wy, the Gran' Jurymen, I 'xpect, 'll
hev to set agin."

Thet's the way matters stood at fust ;
now wut wuz I to du,

But jes' to make the best on 't an' off
coat an' buckle tu ?

Ther' ain't a livin' man thet finds an
income necessarier

Than me,— bimeby I 'll tell ye how I
fin'lly come to merry her.

She hed another motive, tu : I mention
of it here

I' encourage lads thet 's growin' up to
study 'n' persevere,

An' show 'em how much better 't pays
to mind their winter-schoolin'

'Than to go off on benders 'n' sech, an'
waste their time in foolin' ;

Ef't warn't for studyin' evenins, I
never 'd ha' been here

An orn'ment o' socity, in my appro-
prut spear :

She wanted somebody, ye see, o' taste
an' cultivation,

To talk along o' preachers when they
stopt to the plantation ;

For folks in Dixie th't read an' rite,
unless it is by jarks,

Is skurce ez wut they wuz among th'
oridgele patriarchs ;

To fit a feller f' wut they call the soshle
higherarchy,

All thet you 've gut to know is jes' be-
yut'd an evrage darky ;

Schoolin' 's wut they can't seem to
stan', they're tu consarned high-
pressure,

As ' knowin' t' much might spile a boy
for bein' a Secesher.

We hain't no settled preachin' here,
ner ministeril taxes ;

The min'ster's only settlement 's the
carpet-bag he packs his

Razor an' soap-brush intu, with his
hymbook an' his Bible,—

But they *du* preach, I swan to man, it 's
puf'kly indescrib'le !

They go it like an Ericsson's ten-hoss-
power coleric ingine,

An' make Ole Split-Foot winch an'
squum, for all he 's used to singe-
in' ;

Hawkins's whetstone ain't a pinch o'
primin' to the innards

To hearin' on 'em put free grace t' a lot
o' tough old sinhard's !

But I must eend this letter now : 'fore
long I 'll send a fresh un ;

I 've lots o' things to write about, per-
ticklerly Seceshun :

I 'm called off now to mission-work, to
let a leetle law in

To Cynthy's hide : an' so, till death,
Yourn,

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN.

—

No. II.

MASON AND SLIDELL: A
YANKEE IDYLL.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 6th Jan., 1862.

GENTLEMEN,— I was highly gratified by the insertion of a portion of my letter in the last number of your valuable and entertaining Miscellany, though in a type which rendered its substance inaccessible even to the beautiful new spectacles presented to me by a Committee of the Parish on New Year's Day. I trust that I was able to bear your very considerable abridgment of my lucubrations with a spirit becoming a Christian. My third granddaughter, Rebekah, aged fourteen years, and whom I have trained to read slowly and with proper emphasis (a practice too much neglected in our modern systems of education), read aloud to me the excellent essay upon "Old Age," the author of which I cannot help suspecting to be a young man who has never yet known what it was to have snow (*canties morosa*) upon his own roof. *Dissolve frigus, large super foco ligna reponens*, is a rule for the young, whose wood-pile is yet abundant for such cheerful lenitives. A good life behind him is the best thing to keep an old man's shoulders from shivering at every breath of sorrow or ill-fortune. But

methinks it were easier for an old man to feel the disadvantages of youth than the advantages of age. Of these latter I reckon one of the chiefest to be this; that we attach a less inordinate value to our own productions, and, distrusting daily more and more our own wisdom (with the conceit whereof at twenty we wrap ourselves away from knowledge as with a garment), do reconcile ourselves with the wisdom of God. I could have wished, indeed, that room might have been made for the residue of the anecdote relating to Deacon Tinkham, which would not only have gratified a natural curiosity on the part of the publick (as I have reason to know from several letters of inquiry already received), but would also, as I think, have largely increased the circulation of your Magazine in this town. *Nihil humani alienum*, there is a curiosity about the affairs of our neighbours which is not only pardonable, but even commendable. But I shall abide a more fitting season.

As touching the following literary effort of Esquire Biglow, much might be profitably said on the topick of Idyllick and Pastoral Poetry, and concerning the proper distinctions to be made between them, from Theocritus, the inventor of the former, to Cellins, the latest authour I know of who has emulated the classicks in the latter style. But in the time of Civil War worthy a Milton to defend and a Lucan to sing, it may be reasonably doubted whether the publick, never too studious of serious instruction, might not consider other objects more deserving of present attention. Concerning the title of Idyll, which Mr. Biglow has adopted at my suggestion, it may not be improper to animadvert, that the name properly signifies a poem somewhat rustick in phrase (for, though the learned are not agreed as to the particular dialect employed by Theocritus, they are universonal both as to its rusticity and its capacity of rising now and then to the level of more elevated sentiments and expressions), while it is also descriptive of real scenery and manners.

Yet it must be admitted that the production now in question (which here and there bears perhaps too plainly the marks of my correcting hand) does partake of the nature of a Pastoral, inasmuch as the interlocutors therein are purely imaginary beings, and the whole is little better than *καπινοῦ σκιᾶς ὄναρ*. The plot was, as I believe, suggested by the "Twa Briggs" of Robert Burns, a Scottish poet of the last century, as that found its prototype in the "Mutual Complaint of Plainstones and Causey" by Fergusson, though the metre of this latter be different by a foot in each verse. I reminded my talented young parishioner and friend that Concord Bridge had long since yielded to the edacious tooth of Time. But he answered me to this effect: that there was no greater mistake of an authour than to suppose the reader had no fancy of his own; that, if once that faculty was to be called into activity, it were *better* to be in for the whole sheep than the shoulder; and that he knew Concord like a book, — an expression questionable in propriety, since there are few things with which he is not more familiar than with the printed page. In proof of what he affirmed, he showed me some verses which with others he had stricken out as too much delaying the action, but which I communicate in this place because they rightly define "punkin-seed" (which Mr. Bartlett would have a kind of perch, — a creature to which I have found a rod or pole not to be so easily equivalent in our inland waters as in the books of arithmetic), and because it conveys an eulogium on the worthy son of an excellent father, with whose acquaintance (*eheu, fugaces anni!*) I was formerly honoured.

"But nowadays the Bridge ain't wut they
show,
So much ez Em'son, Hawthorne, an' Thoreau.
I know the village, though; was sent there
once
A-schoolin', 'cause to home I played the
dunce;
An' I've ben sence a-visitin' the Jedge,

Whose garding whispers with the river's
edge,

Where I've sot mornin's lazy as the bream,
Whose on'y business is to head up-stream,
(We call 'em punkin-seed,) or else in chat
Along 'th the Jedge, who covers with his hat
More wit an' gumption an' shrewd Yankee
sense

Than there is mosses on an ole stone fence."

Concerning the subject-matter of the verses, I have not the leisure at present to write so fully as I could wish, my time being occupied with the preparation of a discourse for the forthcoming bi-centenary celebration of the first settlement of Jaalam East Parish. It may gratify the publick interest to mention the circumstance, that my investigations to this end have enabled me to verify the fact (of much historick importance, and hitherto hotly debated) that Shearjashub Tarbox was the first child of white parentage born in this town, being named in his father's will under date August 7th, or 9th, 1662. It is well known that those who advocate the claims of Mehetable Goings are unable to find any trace of her existence prior to October of that year. As respects the settlement of the Mason and Slidell question, Mr. Biglow has not incorrectly stated the popular sentiment, so far as I can judge by its expression in this locality. For myself, I feel more sorrow than resentment: for I am old enough to have heard those talk of England who still, even after the unhappy estrangement, could not un-school their lips from calling her the Mother-Country. But England has insisted on ripping up old wounds, and has undone the healing work of fifty years; for nations do not reason, they only feel, and the *spretæ injuria formæ* rankles in their minds as bitterly as in that of a woman. And because this is so, I feel the more satisfaction that our Government has acted (as all Governments should, standing as they do between the people and their passions) as if it had arrived at years of discretion. There are three short and simple words, the hardest of all to pronounce in any language (and I suspect they were no easier before the confusion of tongues),

but which no man or nation that cannot utter can claim to have arrived at manhood. Those words are, *I was wrong*, and I am proud that, while England played the boy, our rulers had strength enough from the People below and wisdom enough from God above to quit themselves like men.

The sore points on both sides have been skilfully exasperated by interested and unscrupulous persons, who saw in a war between the two countries the only hope of profitable return for their investment in Confederate stock, whether political or financial. The always supercilious, oiten insulting, and sometimes even brutal tone of British journals and publick men has certainly not tended to soothe whatever resentment might exist in America.

"Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,
But why did you kick me down stairs?"

We have no reason to complain that England, as a necessary consequence of her clubs, has become a great society for the minding of other people's business, and we can smile good-naturedly when she lectures other nations on the sins of arrogance and conceit: but we may justly consider it a breach of the political *convenances* which are expected to regulate the intercourse of one well-bred government with another, when men holding places in the ministry allow themselves to dictate our domestic policy, to instruct us in our duty, and to stigmatize as unholy a war for the rescue of whatever a high-minded people should hold most vital and most sacred. Was it in good taste, that I may use the mildest term, for Earl Russell to expound our own Constitution to President Lincoln, or to make a new and fallacious application of an old phrase for our benefit, and tell us that the Rebels were fighting for independence and we for empire? As if all wars for independence were by nature just and deserving of sympathy, and all wars for empire ignoble and worthy only of reprobation, or as if these easy phrases in any way characterized this terrible struggle, — terrible not so truly

in any superficial sense, as from the essential and deadly enmity of the principles that underlie it. His Lordship's bit of borrowed rhetoric would justify Smith O'Brien, Nana Sahib, and the Maori chieftains, while it would condemn nearly every war in which England has ever been engaged. Was it so very presumptuous in us to think that it would be decorous in English statesmen if they spared time enough to acquire some kind of knowledge, though of the most elementary kind, in regard to this country and the questions at issue here, before they pronounced so off-hand a judgment? Or is political information expected to come Dogberry-fashion in England, like reading and writing, by nature?

And now all respectable England is wondering at our irritability, and sees a quite satisfactory explanation of it in our national vanity. *Suave mari magno*, it is pleasant, sitting in the easy-chairs of Downing Street, to sprinkle pepper on the raw wounds of a kindred people struggling for life, and philosophical to find in self-conceit the cause of our instinctive resentment. Surely we were of all nations the least liable to any temptation of vanity at a time when the gravest anxiety and the keenest sorrow were never absent from our hearts. Nor is conceit the exclusive attribute of any one nation. The earliest of English travellers, Sir John Mandeville, took a less provincial view of the matter when he said, "For fro what partie of the erthe that men duellen, other aboven or beneath, it semethe always to hem that duellen that thei gon more righte than any other folke." The English have always had their fair share of this amiable quality. We may say of them still, as the authour of the *Lettres Cabalistiques* said of them more than a century ago, "*Ces derniers disent naturellement qu'il n'y a qu'eux qui soient estimables.*" And, as he also says, "*F'aïmeroï presque autant tomber entre les mains d'un Inquisiteur que d'un Anglois qui me fait sentir sans cesse combien il s'estime plus que moi,*

et qui ne daigne me parler que pour injurier ma Nation et pour m'ennuyer du récit des grandes qualités de la sienne." Of this Bull we may safely say with Horace, *habet fœnum in cornu*. What we felt to be especially insulting was the quiet assumption that the descendants of men who left the Old World for the sake of principle, and who had made the wilderness into a New World patterned after an Idea, could not possibly be susceptible of a generous or lofty sentiment, could have no feeling of nationality deeper than that of a tradesman for his shop. One would have thought, in listening to England, that we were presumptuous in fancying that we were a nation at all, or had any other principle of union than that of booths at a fair, where there is no higher notion of government than the constable, or better image of God than that stamped upon the current coin.

It is time for Englishmen to consider whether there was nothing in the spirit of their press and of their leading public men calculated to rouse a just indignation, and to cause a permanent estrangement on the part of any nation capable of self-respect, and sensitively jealous, as ours then was, of foreign interference. Was there nothing in the indecent haste with which beligerent rights were conceded to the Rebels, nothing in the abrupt tone assumed in the Trent case, nothing in the fitting out of Confederate privateers, that might stir the blood of a people already overcharged with doubt, suspicion, and terrible responsibility? The laity in any country do not stop to consider points of law, but they have an instinctive appreciation of the *animus* that actuates the policy of a foreign nation; and in our own case they remembered that the British authorities in Canada did not wait till diplomacy could send home to England for her slow official tinder box to fire the "Caroline." Add to this, what every sensible American knew, that the moral support of England was equal to an army of two hundred thousand men to

the Rebels, while it insured us another year or two of exhausting war. It was not so much the spite of her words (though the time might have been more tastefully chosen) as the actual power for evil in them that we felt as a deadly wrong. Perhaps the most immediate and efficient cause of mere irritation was the sudden and unaccountable change of manner on the other side of the water. Only six months before, the Prince of Wales had come over to call us cousins; and everywhere it was nothing but "our American brethren," that great offshoot of British institutions in the New World, so almost identical with them in laws, language, and literature, — this last of the alliterative compliments being so bitterly true, that perhaps it will not be retracted even now. To this outburst of long-repressed affection we responded with genuine warmth, if with something of the awkwardness of a poor relation bewildered with the sudden tightening of the ties of consanguinity when it is rumored that he has come into a large estate. Then came the Rebellion, and, *presto!* a flaw in our titles was discovered, the plate we were promised at the family table is flung at our head, and we were again the scum of creation, intolerably vulgar, at once cowardly and overbearing, — no relations of theirs, after all, but a dreggy hybrid of the basest bloods of Europe. Panurge was not quicker to call Friar John his *former* friend. I cannot help thinking of Walter Mapes's jingling paraphrase of Petronius, —

"Dummodo sim splendidis vestibus ornatus,
Et multa familia sim circumvallatus,
Prudens sum et sapiens et inorigeratus,
Et tuus nepos sum et tu meus cognatus," —

which I may freely render thus : —

So long as I was prosperous, I'd dinners by
the dozen,
Was well-bred, witty, virtuous, and every-
body's cousin;
If luck should turn, as well she may, her
fancy is so flexible,
Will virtue, cousinship, and all return with
her from exile?

There was nothing in all this to exasperate a philosopher, much to make

him smile rather; but the earth's surface is not chiefly inhabited by philosophers, and I revive the recollection of it now in perfect good-humour, merely by way of suggesting to our *ci-devant* British cousins, that it would have been easier for them to hold their tongues than for us to keep our tempers under the circumstances.

The English Cabinet made a blunder, unquestionably, in taking it so hastily for granted that the United States had fallen forever from their position as a first-rate power, and it was natural that they should vent a little of their vexation on the people whose inexplicable obstinacy in maintaining freedom and order, and in resisting degradation, was likely to convict them of their mistake. But if bearing a grudge be the sure mark of a small mind in the individual, can it be a proof of high spirit in a nation? If the result of the present estrangement between the two countries shall be to make us more independent of British twaddle (*Indomito nec dira ferens stipendi i Tauro*), so much the better; but if it is to make us insensible to the value of British opinion, it matters where it gives us the judgment of an impartial and cultivated outsider, if we are to shut ourselves out from the advantages of English culture, the loss will be ours, and not theirs. Because the door of the old homestead has been once slammed in our faces, shall we in a huff reject all future advances of conciliation, and cut ourselves foolishly off from any share in the humanizing influences of the place, with its ineffable riches of association, its heirlooms of immemorial culture, its historic monuments, ours no less than theirs, its noble gallery of ancestral portraits? We have only to succeed, and England will not only respect, but, for the first time, begin to understand us. And let us not, in our justifiable indignation at wanton insult, forget that England is not the England only of snobs who dread the democracy they do not comprehend, but the England of history, of heroes, statesmen, and poets, whose

names are dear, and their influence as salutary to us as to her.

Let us strengthen the hands of those in authority over us, and curb our own tongues, remembering that General Wait commonly proves in the end more than a match for General Headlong, and that the Good Book ascribes safety to a multitude, indeed, but not to a mob, of counsellours. Let us remember and perpend the words of Pausus Emilius to the people of Rome; that, "if they judged they could manage the war to more advantage by any other, he would willingly yield up his charge; but if they confided in him, *they were not to make themselves his colleagues in his office, or raise reports, or criticise his actions, but, without talking, supply him with means and assistance necessary to the carrying on of the war; for, if they proposed to command their own commander, they would render this expedition more ridiculous than the former.*" (*Vide Plutarchum in Vita P. E.*) Let us also not forget what the same excellent authour says concerning Perseus's fear of spending money, and not permit the covetousness of Brother Jonathan to be the good fortune of Jefferson Davis. For my own part, till I am ready to admit the Commander-in-Chief to my pulpit, I shall abstain from planning his battles. If courage be the sword, yet is patience the armour of a nation; and in our desire for peace, let us never be willing to surrender the Constitution bequeathed us by fathers at least as wise as ourselves (even with Jefferson Davis to help us), and, with those degenerate Romans, *tuta et presentia quam vetera et periculosa malle.*

And not only should we bridle our own tongues, but the pens of others, which are swift to convey useful intelligence to the enemy. This is no new inconvenience; for, under date, 3d June, 1745, General Pepperell wrote thus to Governor Shirley from Louisbourg:—"What your Excellency observes of the *army's being made acquainted with any plans proposed, until ready to be put in execution, has*

always been disagreeable to me, and I have given many cautions relating to it. But when your Excellency considers that *our Council of War consists of more than twenty members, I am persuaded you will think it impossible for me to hinder it, if any of them will persist in communicating to inferior officers and soldiers what ought to be kept secret.* I am informed that the Boston newspapers are filled with paragraphs from private letters relating to the expedition. Will your Excellency permit me to say I think it may be of ill consequence? Would it not be convenient, if your Excellency should forbid the Printers' inserting such news?" Verily, if *tempora mutantur*, we may question the *et nos mutamur in illis*; and if tongues be leaky, it will need all hands at the pumps to save the Ship of State. Our history dotes and repeats itself. If Sassyus (rather than Alcibiades) find a parallel in Beauregard, so Weakwash, as he is called by the brave Lieutenant Lion Gardiner, need not seek far among our own Sachems for his antitype.

With respect,

Your obt humble servt,
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

I LOVE to start out arter night's begun,
An' all the chores about the farm are done,
The critters milked an' foddered, gates shet fast,
Tools cleaned aginst to-morrer, supper past,
An' Nancy darnin' by her ker'sene lamp, —
I love, I say, to start upon a tramp,
To shake the kinkles out o' back an' legs,
An' kind o' rack my life off from the dregs
Thet's apt to settle in the buttery-hutch
Of folks thet foller in one rut too much:
Hard work is good an' wholesome,
past all doubt;

But 't ain't so, ef the mind gits tucked out.
 Now, bein' born in Middlesex, you know,
 There's certin spots where I like best to go:
 The Concord road, for instance, (I, for one,
 Most gin'lly ollers call it *John Bull's Run*,)
 The field o' Lexin'ton where England tried
 The fastest colours thet she ever dyed,
 An' Concord Bridge, thet Davis, when he came,
 Found was the bee-line track to heaven an' fame,
 Ez all roads be by natur', ef your soul
 Don't sneak thru shun-pikes so's to save the toll.

They're 'most too fur away, take too much time
 To visit o' 'em, ef it ain't in rhyme;
 But the 's a walk thet 's hendier, a sight,
 An' suits me fust-rate of a winter's night, —
 I mean the round whale's-back o' Prospect Hill.
 I love to l'iter there while night grows still.
 An' in the twinklin' villages about,
 Fust here, then there, the well-saved lights goes out,
 An' nary sound but watch-dogs' false alarms,
 Or muffled cock-crows from the drowsy farms,
 Where some wise rooster (men act jest thet way)
 Stands to 't thet moon-rise is the break o' day:
 (So Mister Seward sticks a three-months' pin
 Where the war 'd oughto eend, then tries agin;
 My gran'ther's rule was safer 'n 't is to crow:
Don't never prophesy, — unless ye know.)
 I love to muse there till it kind o' seems
 Ez ef the world went eddyin' off in dreams;

The northwest wind thet twitches at my baird
 Blows out o' sturdier days not easy scared,
 An' the same moon thet this December shines
 Starts out the tents an' booths o' Putnam's lines;
 The rail-fence posts, across the hill thet runs,
 Turn ghosts o' sogers should'rin' ghosts o' guns;
 Ez wheels the sentry, glints a flash o' light,
 Along the firelock won at Concord Fight,
 An', 'twixt the silences, now fur, now nigh,
 Rings the sharp challenge, hums the low reply.

Ez I was settin' so, it warn't long sence,
 Mixin' the puffict with the present tense,
 I heerd two voices som'ers in the air,
 Though, ef I was to die, I can't tell where:
 Voices I call 'em: 't was a kind o' sough
 Like pine-trees thet the wind 's ageth'rin' through;
 An', fact, I thought it *was* the wind a spell,
 Then some misdoubted, could n't airily tell,
 Fust sure, then not, jest as you hold an eel,
 I knowed, an' did n't, — fin'lly seemed to feel
 'T was Concord Bridge a talkin' off to kill
 With the Stone Spike thet 's druv thru Bunker Hill;
 Whether 't was so, or ef I on'y dreamed,
 I could n't say; I tell it ez it seemed.

THE BRIDGE.

Wal, neighbor, tell us wut 's turned up thet 's new?
 You're younger 'n I be, — nigher Boston, tu:
 An' down to Boston, ef you take their showin,

Wut they don't know ain't hardly
 wuth the knowin'.
 There's *sunthin'* goin' on, I know:
 las' night
 The British sogers killed in our gret
 fight
 (Nigh fifty year they hed n't stirred
 nor spoke)
 Made sech a coil you 'd thought a dam
 hed broke:
 Why, one he up an' beat a revellee
 With his own crossbones on a holler
 tree,
 Till all the graveyards swarmed out
 like a hive
 With faces I hain't seen sence Seventy-
 five.
 Wut *is* the news? 'T ain't good, or
 they 'd be cheerin'.
 Speak slow an' clear, for I'm some
 hard o' hearin'.

THE MONIMENT.

I don't know hardly ef it's good or
 bad, —

THE BRIDGE.

At wust, it can't be wus than wut we ve
 had.

THE MONIMENT.

You know them envys thet the Rebbles
 sent,
 An' Cap'n Wilkes he borried o' the
 Trent?

THE BRIDGE.

Wut! they ha'n't hanged 'em? Then
 their wits is gone!
 Thet's the sure way to make a goose a
 swan!

THE MONIMENT.

No: England she *would* hev 'em, *Fee,
 Faw, Fum!*
 (Ez though she hed n't fools enough to
 home,)
 So they've returned 'em —

THE BRIDGE.

Hev they? Wal, by heaven,
 Thet's the wust news I've heerd sence
 Seventy-seven!

By George, I meant to say, though I
 declare
 It's 'most enough to make a deacon
 swear.

THE MONIMENT.

Now don't go off half-cock: folks never
 gains
 By usin' pepper-sarse instid o' brains
 Come, neighbor, you don't under-
 stand —

THE BRIDGE.

How? Hey?
 Not understand? Why, wut's to hen-
 der, pray?
 Must I go huntin' round to find a chap
 To tell me when my face hez hed a
 slap?

THE MONIMENT.

See here: the British they found out a
 flaw
 In Cap'n Wilkes's readin' o' the law:
 (They *make* all laws, you know, an' so,
 o' course,
 It's nateral they should understan'
 their force:)
 He 'd oughto took the vessel into port,
 An' hed her sot on by a reg'lar court;
 She was a mail-ship, an' a steamer, tu,
 An' thet, they say, hez changed the
 pint o' view,
 Coz the old practice, bein' meant for
 sails,
 Ef tried upon a steamer, kind o' fails;
 You *may* take out despatches, but you
 mus' n't
 Take nary man —

THE BRIDGE.

You mean to say, you dus' n't!
 Changed pint o' view! No, no, — it's
 overboard
 With law an' gospel, when their ox is
 gored!
 I tell ye, England's law, on sea an'
 land,
 Hez ollers ben, "*I've gut the heaviest
 hand.*"
 Take nary man? Fine preachin' from
her lips!
 Why, she hez taken hunderds from *our*
 ships,

An' would agin, an' swear she had a right to,
Ef we warn't strong enough to be per-
lite to.

Of all the sarse thet I can call to mind,
England *doos* make the most on-
pleasant kind :

It's you're the sinner ollers, she's the
saint ;

Wut's good's all English, all thet
is n't ain't ;

Wut profits her is ollers right an' just,
An' ef you don't read Scriptur so, you
must ;

She's praised herself until she fairly
thinks

There ain't no light in Natur when she
winks ;

Hain't she the Ten Comman'ments in
her pus ?

Could the world stir 'thout she went,
tu, ez nus ?

She ain't like other mortals, thet's a
fact :

She never stopped the habus-corporis
act,

Nor specie payments, nor she never yet
Cut down the int'rest on her public
debt ;

She don't put down rebellions, lets 'em
breed.

An' 's ollers willin' Ireland should
secede ;

She's all thet 's honest, honnable, an'
fair,

An' when the vartooos died they made
her heir.

THE MONIMENT.

Wal, wal, two wrongs don't never make
a right .

Ef we're mistaken, own up, an' don't
fight :

For gracious' sake, ha'n't we enough
to du

'Thout gettin' up a fight with England,
tu ?

She thinks we're rabble-rid —

THE BRIDGE.

An' so we can't
Distinguish 'twixt *You ought n't* an'
You sha'n't!

She judges by herself; she's no idear

How't stiddies folks to give 'em their
fair sneer :

The odds 'twixt her an' us is plain 's a
steeple, —

Her People's turned to Mob, our Mob
's turned People.

THE MONIMENT.

She's riled jes' now —

THE BRIDGE.

Plain proof her cause ain't strong, —
The one thet fust gits mad 's 'most ollers
wring.

Why, sence she helped in lickin' Nap
the Fust,

An' pricked a bubble jest agoin' to
bust,

With Rooshy, Prooshy, Austray, all
asistin',

Th' aint nut a face but wut she's shook
her fist in,

Ez though she done it all, an' ten times
more,

An' nothin' never hed gut done afore,
Nor never could agin', 'thout she wuz
spliced

On to one eend an' gin th' old airth a
hoist.

She *is* some punkins, thet I wun't deny,
(For ain't she some related to you 'u'
I?)

But there's a few small intrists here
below

Outside the counter o' John Bull an'
Co,

An', though they can't conceit how 't
should be so,

I guess the Lord druv down Creation's
spiles

'Thout no *gret* helpin' from the British
Isles,

An' could contrive to keep things pooty
stiff

Ef they withdrewed from business in a
miff ;

I ha'n't no patience with sech swellin'
fellers ez

Think God can't forge 'thout them to
blow the bellerses.

THE MONIMENT.

You're ollers quick to set your back
aridge, —

Though 't suits a tom-cat more 'n a
sober bridge:
Don't you git het: they thought the
thing was planned;
They 'll cool off when they come to un-
derstand.

THE BRIDGE.

Ef *thet*'s wut you expect, you 'll *hev*
to wait:
Folks never understand the folks they
hate:
She 'll fin' some other grievance jest ez
good,
'Fore the month 's out, to git misun-
derstood.
England cool off! She 'll do it, ef she
sees
She 's run her head into a swarm o'
bees.
I ain't so prejudiced ez wut you spose:
I hev thought England was the best
thet goes;
Remember (no, you can't), when *I* was
reared,
God save the King was all the tune you
heerd:
But it 's enough to turn Wachuset roun',
This stumpin' fellers when you think
they 're down.

THE MONIMENT.

But, neighbor, ef they prove their claim
at law,
The best way is to settle, an' not jaw.
An' don't le' 's mutter 'bout the awfle
bricks
We 'll give 'em, ef we ketch 'em in a fix:
That 'ere 's most frequently the kin' o'
talk
Of critters can't be kicked to toe the
chalk;
Your "You 'll see *nex*' time!" an'
"Look out bumbly!"
Most ollers ends in eatin' umble-pie.
'T wun't pay to scringe to England:
will it pay
To fear that meaner bully, old "They 'll
say"?"
Suppose they *du* say: words are drefle
bores,
But they ain't quite so bad ez seventy-
fours.
Wut England wants is jest a wedge to fit

Where it 'll help to widen out our split;
She 's found her wedge, an' 't ain't for
us to come
An' lend the beetle *thet*'s to drive it
home.
For growed-up folks like us 't would be
a scandie,
When we git sarsed, to fly right off the
handle.
England ain't *all* bad, coz she thinks
us blind:
Ef she can't change her skin, she can
her mind;
An' we shall see her change it double-
quick,
Soon ez we 've proved thet we 're
a-goin' to lick.
She an' Columby's gut to be fas'
friends;
For the world prospers by their privit
ends:
'T would put the clock back all o' fifty
years,
Ef they should fall together by the ears.

THE BRIDGE.

I 'gree to thet; she s nigh us to wut
France is;
But then she 'll hev to make the fust
advances;
We 've gut pride, tu, an' gut it by good
rights,
An' ketch *me* stoopin' to pick up the
mites
O' condescension she 'll be lettin' fall
When she finds out we ain't dead arter
all!
I tell ye wut, it takes more 'n one good
week
Afore *my* nose forgits it 's hed a tweak.

THE MONIMENT.

She 'll come out right bumbly, thet I 'll
engage,
Soon ez she gits to seein' we 're of age;
This talkin' down o' hers ain't wuth a
fuss;
It 's nat'ral ez nut likin' 't is to us;
Ef we 're agoin' to prove we *be* growed-
up,
'T wun't be by barkin' iike a tarrier
pup,
But turnin' to an' makin' things ez
good

Ez wut we're ollers braggin' that we
could ;
We're bound to be good friends, an' so
we'd oughto,
In spite of all the fools both sides the
water.

THE BRIDGE.

I b'lieve that's so ; but hearken in
your ear, —
I'm older'n you, — Peace wun't keep
house with Fear :
Ef you want peace, the thing you've
gut to du
Is jes' to show you're up to fightin', tu.
I recollect how sailors' rights was won
Yard locked in yard, hot gun-lip kissin'
gun :
Why, afore thet, John Bull sot up thet
he
Hed gut a kind o' mortgage on the sea ;
You'd thought he held by Gran'ther
Adam's will,
An' ef you knuckle down, *he* 'll think
so still.
Better thet all our ships an' all their
crews
Should sink to rot in ocean's dreamless
ooze,
Each torn flag wavin' challenge ez it
went,
An' each dumb gun a brave man's
moniment,
Than seek sech peace ez only cowards
crave :
Give *me* the peace of dead men or of
brave !

THE MONIMENT.

I say, ole boy, it ain't the Glorious
Fourth :
You'd oughto larned 'fore this wut talk
wuz worth.
It ain't *our* nose thet gits put out o' jint ;
It's England thet gives up her dearest
pint.
We've gut, I tell ye now, enough to du
In our own fem'ly fight, afore we're
thru.
I hoped, las' spring, jest arter Sumter's
shame,
When every flag-staff flapped its teth-
ered flame,

An' all the people, startled from their
doubt,
Come must'rin' to the flag with sech a
shout, —
I hoped to see things settled 'fore this
fall,
The Rebbles licked, Jeff Davis hanged,
an' all ;
Then come Bull Run, an' *sence* then
I've ben waitin'
Like boys in Jennooary thaw for skatin',
Nothin' to du but watch my shadder's
trace
Swing, like a ship at anchor, roun' my
base,
With daylight's flood an' ebb : it's
gittin' slow,
An' I 'most think we'd better let 'em
go.
I tell ye wut, this war's a-goin to
cost —

THE BRIDGE.

An' I tell *you* it wun't be money lost ;
Taxes milks dry, but, neighbor, you'll
allow
Thet havin' things onsettled kills the
cow :
We've gut to fix this thing for good
an' all ;
It's no use buildin' wut's a-goin' to
fall.
I'm older'n you, an' I've seen things
an' men,
An' *my* experunce, — tell ye wut it's
ben :
Folks thet worked thorough was the
ones thet thrive,
But bad work follers ye ez long's ye
live ;
You can't git red on 't ; jest ez sure ez
sin,
It's ollers askin' to be done agin :
Ef we should part, it wou'dn't be a
week
'Fore your soft-soddered peace would
spring aleak
We've turned our cuffs up, but, to put
her thru,
We must git mad an' off with jackets,
tu ;
'T wun't du to think thet killin' ain't
perlite, —

You've gut to be in airnest, ef you
 fight ;
 Why, two-thirds o' the Rebbles 'ould
 cut dirt,
 Ef they once thought thet Guv'ment
 meant to hurt ;
 An' I *du* wish our Gin'ral's hed in mind
 The folks in front more than the folks
 behind ;
 You wun't do much ontill you think it 's
 God,
 An' not constitoounts, thet holds the
 rod ;
 We want some more o' Gideon's sword,
 I jedge,
 For proclamations ha'n't no gret of
 edge ;
 There 's nothin' for a cancer but the
 knife,
 Onless you set by 't more than by your
 life.
 I've seen hard times ; I see a war be-
 gun
 Thet folks thet love their bellies never 'd
 won ;
 Pharo's lean kine hung on for seven
 long year ;
 But when 't was done, we did n't count
 it dear.
 Why, law an' order, honor, civil right,
 Ef they *ain't* wuth it, wut *is* wuth a
 fight ?
 I 'm older 'n you : the plough, the axe,
 the mill,
 All kin's o' labor an' all kin's o' skill,
 Would be a rabbit in a wile-cat's claw,
 Ef 't warn't for thet slow critter, 'stab-
 lished law ;
 Onsettle *thet*, an' all the world goes
 whiz,
 A screw 's gut loose in everythin' there
 is :
 Good buttresses once settled, don't you
 fret
 An' stir 'em ; take a bridge's word for
 thet !
 Young folks are smart, but all ain't
 good thet 's new ;
 I guess the gran'thers they knowed
 sunthin', tu.

THE MONIMENT.

Amen to thet ! build sure in the begin-
 nin',

An' then don't never tech the under-
 pinnin' :
 Th' older a guv'ment is, the better 't
 suits ;
 New ones hunt folks's corns out like
 new boots :
 Change jes' for change, is like them big
 hotels
 Where they shift plates, an' let ye live
 on smells.

THE BRIDGE.

Wal, don't give up afore the ship goes
 down ;
 It 's a stiff gale, but Providence wun't
 drown ;
 An' God wun't leave us yit to sink or
 swim,
 Ef we don't fail to du wut 's right by
 Him.
 This land o' ourn, I tell ye, 's gut to be
 A better country than man ever see.
 I feel my sperit swellin' with a cry
 Thet seems to say, "Break forth an'
 prophesy !"
 O strange New World, thet yit wast
 never young,
 Whose youth from thee by gripin' need
 was wrung,
 Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose
 baby-bed
 Was prowled roun' by the Injun's crack-
 lin' tread,
 An' who grew'st strong thru shifts an'
 wants an' pains,
 Nussed by stern men with empires in
 their brains,
 Who saw in vision their young Ishmel
 strain
 With each hard hand a vassal ocean's
 mane,
 Thou, skilled by Freedom an' by gret
 events
 To pitch new States ez Old-World men
 pitch tents,
 Thou, taught by Fate to know Jeho-
 vah's plan
 Thet man's devices can't unmake a
 man,
 An' whose free latch-string never was
 drawn in
 Against the poorest child of Adam's
 kin, —

The grave's not dug where traitor
hands shall lay
In fearful haste thy murdered corse
away!
I see —

Jest here some dogs be-
gun to bark,
So that I lost old Concord's last re-
mark:
I listened long, but all I seemed to
hear
Was dead leaves goss'pin' on some
birch-trees near;
But ez they hed'n't no gret things to
say,
An' sed 'em often, I come right away,
An', walkin' home'ards, jest to pass the
time,
I put some thoughts thet bothered me
in rhyme;
I hain't hed time to fairly try 'em on,
But here they be — it's

JONATHAN TO JOHN.

It don't seem hardly right, John,
When both my hands was full,
To stump me to a fight, John, —
Your cousin, tu, John Bull!
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
We know it now," sez he,
"The lion's paw is all the law,
Accordin' to J. B.,
Thet 's fit for you an' me!"

You wonder why we're hot, John?
Your mark wuz on the guns,
The neutral guns, thet shot, John,
Our brothers an' our sons:
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
There's human blood," sez he,
"By fits an' starts, in Yankee hearts,
Though 't may surprise J. B.
More 'n it would you an' me."

Ef I turned mad dogs loose, John,
On *your* front-parlor stairs,
Would it jest meet your views, John,
To wait an' sue their heirs?
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
I on'y guess," sez he,
"Thet ef Vattel on *his* toes fell,

'T would kind o' rile J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

Who made the law thet hurts, John,
Heads I win, — ditto tails?
"J. B." was on his shirts, John,
Unless my memory fails,
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
(I'm good at thet)," sez he,
"Thet sauce for goose ain't *jest* the
juice
For ganders with J. B.,
No more than you or me!"

When your rights was our wrongs,
John,
You did n't stop for fuss, —
Britanny's trident prongs, John,
Was good 'nough law for us.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
Though physic's good," sez he,
"It does n't foller thet he can swaller
Prescriptions signed 'J. B.,'
Put up by you an' me!"

We own the ocean, tu, John:
You mus' n' take it hard,
Ef we can't think with you, John,
It's jest your own back-yard.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
Ef *thet* 's his claim," sez he,
"The fencin'-stuff 'll cost enough
To bust up friend J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

Why talk so drefle big, John,
Of honor when it meant
You did n't care a fig, John,
But jest for *ten per cent?*
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
He 's like the rest," sez he:
"When all is done, it's number one
Thet 's nearest to J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

We give the critters back, John,
Cos Abram thought 't was right;
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,
Provokin' us to fight.
Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
We've a hard row," sez he,
"To hoe jest now; but thet somehow,
May happen to J. B.,
Ez wal ez you an' me!"

We ain't so weak an' poor, John,
 With twenty million people,
 An' close to every door, John,
 A school-house an' a steeple.
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
 It is a fact," sez he,
 "The surest plan to make a Man
 Is, think him so, J. B.,
 Ez much ez you or me!"

Our folks believe in Law, John;
 An' it's for her sake, now,
 They've left the axe an' saw, John,
 The anvil an' the plough.
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
 Ef't warn't for law," sez he,
 "There'd be one shindy from here to
 Indy;
 An' thet don't suit J. B.
 (When't ain't 'twixt you an' me!)"

We know we've got a cause, John,
 Thet's honest, just, an' true;
 We thought't would win applause,
 John,
 Ef nowheres else, from you.
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
 His love of right," sez he,
 "Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton:
 There's natur' in J. B.,
 Ez wal ez you an' me!"

The South says, *Poor folks down!*"
 John,
 An' "*All men up!*" say we, —
 White, yaller, black, an' brown, John:
 Now which is your idee?
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
 John preaches wal," sez he;
 "But, sermon thru, an' come to *du*,
 Why, there's the old J. B.
 A crowdin' you an' me!"

Shall it be love, or hate, John?
 It's you thet's to decide;
 Ain't *your* bonds held by Fate, John,
 Like all the world's beside?
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
 Wise men forgive," sez he,
 "But not forget; an' some time yet
 Thet truth may strike J. B.,
 Ez wal ez you an' me!"

God means to make this land, John,
 Clear thru, from sea to sea,

Believe an' understand, John,
 The *wuth* o' bein' free.
 Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess,
 God's price is high," sez he.
 "But nothin' else than wut He sells
 Wears long, an' thet J. B.
 May larn, like you an' me!"

No. III.

BIRDOFREDUM SAWIN, ESQ.,
 TO MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

*With the following Letter from the
 REVEREND HOMER WILBUR, A. M.*

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC
 MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 7th Feb., 1862.

RESPECTED FRIENDS, — If I know myself, — and surely a man can hardly be supposed to have overpassed the limit of fourscore years without attaining to some proficiency in that most useful branch of learning (*e cælo descendit*, says the pagan poet), — I have no great smack of that weakness which would press upon the publick attention any matter pertaining to my private affairs. But since the following letter of Mr. Sawin contains not only a direct allusion to myself, but that in connection with a topick of interest to all those engaged in the publick ministrations of the sanctuary, I may be pardoned for touching briefly thereupon. Mr. Sawin was never a stated attendant upon my preaching, — never, as I believe, even an occasional one, since the erection of the new house (where we now worship) in 1845. He did, indeed, for a time, supply a not unacceptable bass in the choir; but, whether on some umbrage (*omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus*) taken against the bass-viol, then, and till his decease in 1850 (*æt.* 77,) under the charge of Mr. Asaph Perley, or, as was reported by others, on account of an imminent subscription for a new bell, he thenceforth absented himself

from all outward and visible communion. Yet he seems to have preserved (*altâ mente repostum*), as it were, in the pickle of a mind soured by prejudice, a lasting *scunner*, as he would call it, against our staid and decent form of worship; for I would rather in that wise interpret his fling, than suppose that any chance tares sown by my pulpit discourses should survive so long, while good seed too often fails to root itself. I humbly trust that I have no personal feeling in the matter; though I know that, if we sound any man deep enough, our lead shall bring up the mud of human nature at last. The Bretons believe in an evil spirit which they call *arc'houskezik*, whose office it is to make the congregation drowsy; and though I have never had reason to think that he was specially busy among my flock, yet have I seen enough to make me sometimes regret the hinged seats of the ancient meeting-house, whose lively clatter, not unwillingly intensified by boys beyond eyeshot of the titling-man, served at intervals as a wholesome *réveil*. It is true, I have numbered among my parishioners some who are proof against the prophylactick fennel, nay, whose gift of somno'ence rivalled that of the Cretan Rip Van Winkle, Epimenides, and who, nevertheless, complained not so much of the substance as of the length of my (by them unheard) discourses. Some ingenious persons of a philosophick turn have assured us that our pulpits were set too high, and that the soporifick tendency increased with the ratio of the angle in which the hearer's eye was constrained to seek the preacher. This were a curious topick for investigation. There can be no doubt that some sermons are pitched too high, and I remember many struggles with the drowsy fiend in my youth. Happy Saint Anthony of Padua, whose finny acolytes, however they might profit, could never murmur! *Quare fremuerunt gentes?* Who is he that can twice a week be inspired, or has eloquence (*ut ita dicum*) always on tap? A good man, and, next to David, a sacred poet (himself, haply,

not inexpert of evil in this particular), has said, —

“The worst speak something good: if all
want sense,
God takes a text and preacheth patience.”

There are one or two other points in Mr. Sawin's letter which I would also briefly animadvert upon. And first, concerning the claim he sets up to a certain superiority of blood and lineage in the people of our Southern States, now unhappily in rebellion against lawful authority and their own better interests. There is a sort of opinions, anachronisms at once and anachorisms, foreign both to the age and the country, that maintain a feeble and buzzing existence, scarce to be called life, like winter flies, which in mild weather crawl out from obscure nooks and crannies to expatiate in the sun, and sometimes acquire vigor enough to disturb with their enforced familiarity the studious hours of the scholar. One of the most stupid and pertinacious of these is the theory that the Southern States were settled by a class of emigrants from the Old World socially superior to those who founded the institutions of New England. The Virginians especially lay claim to this generosity of lineage, which were of no possible account, were it not for the fact that such superstitions are sometimes not without their effect on the course of human affairs. The early adventurers to Massachusetts at least paid their passages; no felons were ever shipped thither; and though it be true that many deboshed younger brothers of what are called good families may have sought refuge in Virginia, it is equally certain that a great part of the early deportations thither were the sweepings of the London streets and the leavings of the London stews. It was this my Lord Bacon had in mind when he wrote: “It is a shameful and unblest thing to take the scum of people and wicked condemned men to be the people with whom you plant.” That certain names are found there is nothing to the purpose, for, even had an *alias* been beyond the invention of the knaves of

that generation, it is known that servants were often called by their masters' names, as slaves are now. On what the heralds call the spindle side, some, at least, of the oldest Virginian families are descended from matrons who were exported and sold for so many hogsheads of tobacco the head. So notorious was this, that it became one of the jokes of contemporary playwrights, not only that men bankrupt in purse and character were "food for the Plantations" (and this before the settlement of New England), but also that any drab would suffice to wive such pitiful adventurers. "Never choose a wife as if you were going to Virginia," says Middleton in one of his comedies. The mule is apt to forget all but the equine side of his pedigree. How early the counterfeit nobility of the Old Dominion became a topick of ridicule in the Mother Country may be learned from a play of Mrs. Behn's, founded on the Rebellion of Bacon: for even these kennels of literature may yield a fact or two to pay the raking. Mrs. Flirt, the keeper of a Virginia ordinary, calls herself the daughter of a baronet "undone in the late rebellion,"—her father having in truth been a tailor,—and three of the Council, assuming to themselves an equal splendour of origin, are shown to have been, one "a broken exciseman who came over a poor servant," another a tinker transported for theft, and the third "a common pick-pocket often flogged at the cart's tail." The ancestry of South Carolina will as little pass muster at the Herald's Visitation, though I hold them to have been more reputable, inasmuch as many of them were honest tradesmen and artisans, in some measure exiles for conscience' sake, who would have smiled at the high-flying nonsense of their descendants. Some of the more respectable were Jews. The absurdity of supposing a population of eight millions all sprung from gentle loins in the course of a century and a half is too manifest for confutation. But of what use to discuss the matter? An expert genealogist will provide any solvent man with

a *genus et proavos* to order. My Lord Burleigh said that "nobility was ancient riches," whence also the Spanish were wont to call their nobles *ricos hombres*, and the aristocracy of America are the descendants of those who first became wealthy, by whatever means. Petroleum will in this wise be the source of much good blood among our posterity. The aristocracy of the South, such as it is, has the shallowest of all foundations, for it is only skin-deep,—the most odious of all, for, while affecting to despise trade, it traces its origin to a successful traffick in men, women, and children, and still draws its chief revenues thence. And though, as Doctor Chamberlayne consolingly says in his *Present State of England*, "to become a Merchant of Foreign Commerce, without serving any Apprentisage, hath been allowed no disparagement to a Gentleman born, especially to a younger Brother," yet I conceive that he would hardly have made a like exception in favour of the particular trade in question. Oddly enough this trade reverses the ordinary standards of social respectability no less than of morals, for the retail and domestick is as creditable as the wholesale and foreign is degrading to him who follows it. Are our morals, then, no better than *mores* after all? I do not believe that such aristocracy as exists at the South (for I hold with Marius, *fortissimum quemque generosissimum*) will be found an element of anything like persistent strength in war,—thinking the saying of Lord Bacon (whom one quaintly called *inductionis dominus et Verulamii*) as true as it is pithy, that "the more gentlemen, ever the more books of subsidies." It is odd enough as an historical precedent, that, while the fathers of New England were laying deep in religion, education, and freedom the basis of a polity which has substantially outlasted any then existing, the first work of the founders of Virginia, as may be seen in Wingfield's *Memorial*, was conspiracy and rebellion,—odder yet, as showing the changes which are wrought by circum-

stance, that the first insurrection in South Carolina was against the aristocratical scheme of the Proprietary Government. I do not find that the cuticular aristocracy of the South has added anything to the refinements of civilization except the carrying of bow-knives and the chewing of tobacco, — a high-toned Southern gentleman being commonly not only *quadrumanous*, but *quidruminant*.

I confess that the present letter of Mr. Sawin increases my doubts as to the sincerity of the convictions which he professes, and I am inclined to think that the triumph of the legitimate Government, sure sooner or later to take place, will find him and a large majority of his newly adopted fellow-citizens (who hold with Dædalus, the primal sinner-on-the-fence, that *medium tenere tutissimum*) original Union men. The criticisms towards the close of his letter on certain of our failings are worthy to be seriously perpended; for he is not, as I think, without a spice of vulgar shrewdness. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri*: there is no reckoning without your host. As to the good-nature in us which he seems to gird at, while I would not consecrate a chapel, as they have not scrupled to do in France, to *Nôtre Dame de la Haine* (Our Lady of Hate), yet I cannot forget that the corruption of good-nature is the generation of laxity of principle. Good-nature is our national characteristick; and though it be, perhaps, nothing more than a culpable weakness or cowardice, when it leads us to put up tamely with manifold impositions and breaches of implied contracts, (as too frequently in our publick conveyances,) it becomes a positive crime, when it leads us to look unresentfully on peculation, and to regard treason to the best Government that ever existed as something with which a gentleman may shake hands without soiling his fingers. I do not think the gallows-tree the most profitable member of our *Sylva*; but, since it continues to be planted, I would fain see a Northern limb ingrafted on it, that it may bear some other fruit than loyal Tennesseans.

A relic has recently been discovered on the east bank of Bushy Brook in North Jaalam, which I conceive to be an inscription in Runick characters relating to the early expedition of the Northmen to this continent. I shall make fuller investigations, and communicate the result in due season.

Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

P. S. — I inclose a year's subscription from Deacon Tinkham.

I HED it on my min' las' time, when I
to write ye started,
To tech the leadin' featur's o' my gittin'
me convarted;
But, ez my letters hez to go clean roun'
by way o' Cuby,
'T wun't seem no staler now than then,
by th' time it gits where you be.
You know up North, though secs an'
things air plenty ez you please,
Ther' warn't nut one on 'em thet come
jes' square with my idees:
They all on 'em wuz too much mixed
with Covenants o' Works,
An' would hev answered jest ez wal for
Afrikins an' Turks,
Fer where 's a Christian's privileg an'
his rewards ensuin',
Ef't ain't perfessin' right an eend 'thout
nary need o' doin'?

I dessay they suit workin'-folks thet
ain't noways pertic'lar,
But nut your Southun gen'leman thet
keeps his parpendic'lar;
I don't blame nary man thet casts his
lot along o' *his* folks,
But ef you cal'late to save *me*, 't must
be with folks thet *is* folks:
Cov'nants o' works go 'ginst my grain,
but down here I've found out.
The true fus'-fem'ly A 1 plan, — here 's
how it come about.
When I fus' sot up with Miss S., sez she
to me, sez she,
"Without you git religion, Sir, the
thing can't never be;
Nut but wut I 'especk," sez she, "your
intellectle part,
But you wun't noways du for me athout
a change o' heart."

Nothun religion works wal North, but
 it's ez soft ez spruce,
 Compared to ourn, for keepin' sound,"
 sez she, "upon the goose;
 A day's experunce 'd prove to ye, ez
 easy 'z pull a trigger,
 It takes the Southun pint o' view to
 raise ten bales a nigger;
 You'll fin' thet human natur, South,
 ain't wholesome more 'n skin-deep,
 An' once 't a darkie 's took with it, he
 wun't be wuth his keep."
 "How *shell* I git it, Ma'am?" sez I.
 "Attend the nex' camp-meetin',"
 Sez she, "an' it'll come to ye ez cheap
 ez onbleached sheetin'."

Wal, so I went along an' hearn most
 an impressive sarmon
 About besprinklin' Afriky with fourth-
 proof dew o' Harmon:
 He did n' put no weaknin' in, but gin it
 tu us hot,
 'Z ef he an' Satan 'd ben two bulls in
 one five-acre lot:
 I don't purtend to foller him, but give
 ye jes' the heads;
 For pulpit ellerkence, you know, 'most
 ollers kin' o' spreads.
 Ham's seed wuz gin to us in chaarge,
 an' should n't we be li'ble
 In Kingdom Come, ef we kep' back
 their priv'lege in the Bible?
 The cusses an' the promerses make one
 gret chain, an' ef
 You snake one link out here, one there,
 how much on't ud be lef'?
 All things wuz gin to man for's use,
 his sarvice, an' delight;
 An' don't the Greek an' Hebrew words
 thet mean a Man mean White?
 Ain't it belittlin' the Good Book in all
 its proudest' featur
 To think 't wuz wrote for black an'
 brown an' 'lasses-colored creaturs,
 'Thet could n' read it, ef they would, nor
 ain't by lor allowed to,
 But ough' to take wut we think suits
 their natur, an' be proud to?
 Warn't it more prof'table to bring your
 raw materil thru
 Where you can work it inta grace an'
 inta cotton tu,

Than sendin' missionaries out where
 fevers might defeat 'em,
 An' ef the butcher did n' call, their
 p'rishioners might eat 'em?
 An' then, agin, wut airthly use? Nor
 't warn't our fault, in so fur
 Ez Yankee skippers would keep on
 a-totin' on 'em over.
 'T improved the whites by savin' 'em
 from ary need o' wurkin',
 An' kep' the blacks from bein' lost thru
 idleness an' shirkin';
 We took to 'em ez nat'ral ez a barn-owl
 doos to mice,
 An' hed our hull time on our hands to
 keep us out o' vice;
 It made us feel ez pop'lar ez a hen doos
 with one chicken,
 An' fill our place in Natur's scale by
 givin' 'em a lickin':
 For why should Cæsar git his dues
 more 'n Juno, Pomp, an' Cuffy?
 It's justifyin' Ham to spare a nigger
 when he 's stuffy.
 Where 'd their soles go tu, like to
 know, ef we should let 'em ketch
 Freeknowledgeism an' Fourierism an'
 Speritoolism an' sech?
 When Satan sets himself to work to
 raise his very bes' muss,
 He scatters roun' onscriptur'l views
 relatin' to Ones'nus.
 You 'd ough' to seen, though, how his
 facs an' argymunce an' figgers
 Drawed tears o' real conviction from a
 lot o' pen'tent niggers!
 It warn't like Wilbur's meetin', where
 you 're shet up in a pew,
 Your dickeys sorrin' off your ears, an'
 bilin' to be thru;
 Ther' wuz a tent clost by thet hed a
 kag o' sunthin' in it,
 Where you could go, ef you wuz dry,
 an' damp ye in a minute;
 An' ef you did dror off a spell, ther'
 wuz n't no occasion
 To lose the thread, because, ye see, he
 bellered like all Bashan.
 It's dry work follerin' argymunce an'
 so, 'twix' this an' thet,
 I felt conviction weighin' down some-
 how inside my hat;
 It growed an' growed like Jonah's
 gourd, a kin' o' whirlin' ketched me.

Ontil I fin'ly clean giv out an' owned
 up thet he 'd fetched me ;
 An' when nine tenths o' th' perrish took
 to tumblin' roun' an' hollerin',
 I did n' fin' no gret in th' way o' turn-
 in' tu an' follerin'.
 Soon ez Miss S. see thet, sez she,
 "Thet's wut I call wuth seem' !
 Thet's actin' like a reas'nable an' in-
 tellectle bein' !"
 An' so we fin'ly made it up, concluded
 to hitch hosses,
 An' here I be'n my ellernunt among
 creation's bosses ;
 Arter I 'd drawed sech heaps o' blanks,
 Fortin at last hez sent a prize,
 An' chose me for a shinin' light o' mis-
 sionary entaprise.

This leads me to another pint on
 which I've changed my plan
 O' thinkin' so's't I might become a
 straight-out Southun man.
 Miss S. (her maiden name wuz Higgs,
 o' the fus' fem'ly here)
 On her Ma's side's all Juggernot, on
 Pa's all Cavileer,
 An' sence I've merried into her an'
 stept into her shoes,
 It ain't more'n nateral thet I should
 modderfy my views :
 I've ben a-readin' in Debow ontill I've
 fairly gut
 So 'nlightened thet I 'd full ez lives
 ha' ben a Dook ez nut ;
 An' when we've laid ye all out stiff,
 an' Jeff hez gut his crown,
 An' comes to pick his nobles out,
wun't this child be in town !
 We'll hev an Age o' Chivverly sur-
 passin' Mister Burke's,
 Where every fem'ly is fus'-best an'
 nary white man works :
 Our system's sech, the thing 'll root ez
 easy ez a tater ;
 For while your lords in furrin parts
 ain't noways marked by natur',
 Nor sot apart from ornery folks in
 featur's nor in figgers,
 Ef ourn 'll keep their faces washed,
 you 'll know 'em from their niggers.
 Ain't *sech* things wuth secedin' for, an'
 gittin'

Thet waller in your low idees, an' will
 til all is blue ?
 Fact is, we *air* a diff'rent race, an' I,
 for one, don't see,
 Sech havin' ollers ben the case, how
 w' ever *did* agree.
 It's sunthin' thet you lab'rin'-folks up
 North hed ough' to think on,
 Thet Higgses can't bemean themselves
 to rulin' by a Lincoln, —
 Thet men, (an' guv'nors, tu, thet hez
 sech Normal names ez Pickets,
 Accustomed to no kin' o' work, 'thout
 't is to givin' lickins,
 Can't masure votes with folks thet get
 their livins from their farms,
 An' prob'ly think thet Law's ez good
 ez hev'n' coats o' arms.
 Sence I've ben here, I've hired a chap
 to look about for me
 To git me a transplantable an' thrifty
 fem'ly-tree,
 An' he tells *me* the Sawins is ez much
 o' Normal blood
 Ez Pickets an' the rest on 'em, an'
 older'n Noah's flood.
 Your Normal schools wun't turn ye
 into Normals, for it's clear,
 Ef eddykatin' done the thing, they'd
 be some skurcer here.
 Pickets, Boggsses, Pettuses, Magor-
 fins, Letchers, Polks, —
 Where can you scare up names like
 them among your mudsill folks ?
 Ther' 's nothin' to compare with 'em,
 you'd fin', ef you should glance,
 Among the tip-top iemerlies in Englan',
 nor in France :
 I've hearn from 'sponsible men whose
 word wuz full ez good's their note,
 Men thet can run their face for drinks,
 an' keep a Sunday coat,
 Thet they wuz all on 'em come down,
 and come down pooty fur,
 From folks thet, 'thout their crowns wuz
 on, ou' doors would n' never stir,
 Nor thet ther' warn't a Southun man
 but wut wuz *primy fashy*
 O the bes' blood in Europe, yis, an'
 Afriky an' Ashy :
 Sech bein' the case, is 't likely we should
 bend like cotton-wickin',
 Or set down under anythin' so low-lived
 ez a lickin' ?

More'n this, — hain't we the literatoor
 an' science, tu, by gorry?
 Hain't we them intellectle twins, them
 giants, Simms an' Maury,
 Each with full twice the ushle brains,
 like nothin' thet I know,
 'Thout 't wuz a double-headed calf I see
 once to a show?

For all thet, I warn't jest at fust in
 favor o' secedin';
 I wuz for layin' low a spell to find out
 where 't wuz leadin',
 For hev'in' South-Carliny try her hand
 at seprinationin',
 She takin' resks an' findin' funds, an'
 we co-operationin', —
 I mean a kin' o' hangin' roun' an' set-
 tin' on the fence,
 Till Prov'dunce pinte how to jump
 an' save the most expense;
 I recollected thet 'ere mine o' lead to
 Shiraz Centre
 Thet bust up Jabez Pettibone, an' did
 n't want to ventur'
 'Fore I wuz sartin wut come out ud
 pay for wut went in,
 For swappin' silver off for lead ain't
 the sure way to win;
 (An', fact, it *doos* look now ez though —
 but folks must live an' larn —
 We should git lead, an' more'n we
 want, out o' the Old Consarn;)
 But when I see a man so wise an' honest
 ez Buchanan
 A-lettin' us hev all the forts an' all the
 arms an' cannon,
 Admittin' we wuz nat'lly right an you
 wuz nat'lly wrong,
 Coz you wuz lab'rin'-folks an' we wuz
 wut they call *bong-tong*,
 An' coz there warn't no fight in ye
 more 'n in a mashed potater,
 While two o' *us* can't skurcely meet
 but wut we fight by natur',
 An' th' ain't a bar-room here would
 pay for openin' on 't a night,
 Without it giv the priverlege o' bein'
 shot at sight,
 Which proves we 're Natur's noblemen,
 with whom it don't surprise
 The British aristoxty should feel boun'
 to sympathize, —
 Seen' all this, an' seen', tu, the thing
 wuz strikin' roots

While Uncle Sam sot still in hopes thet
 some one 'd bring his boots,
 I thought th' ole Union's hoops wuz
 off, an' let myself be sucked in
 To rise a peg an' jine the crowd thet
 went for reconstructin'. —
 Thet is, to hev the pardnership under
 th' ole name continer
 Jest ez it wuz, we drorrin' pay, you
 findin' bone an' sinner, —
 On'y to put it in the bond, an' enter 't
 in the journals,
 Thet you're the nat'ral rank an' file,
 an' we the nat'ral kurnels.

Now this I thought a fees'ble plan,
 thet 'ud work smooth ez grease,
 Sutin' the Nineteenth Century an'
 Upper Ten ideas,
 An' there I meant to stick, an' so did
 most o' th' leaders, tu,
 Coz we all thought the chance wuz good
 o' puttin' on it thru;
 But Jeff he hit upon a way o' helpin'
 on us forrard
 By bein' unanmermous, — a trick you
 ain't quite up to, Norrard.
 A baldin hain't no more 'f a chance
 with them new apple-corers
 Than folks's oppersition views against
 the Ringtail Roarers;
 They'll take 'em out on him 'bout
 east, — one canter on a rail
 Makes a man feel unanmermous ez Jo-
 nah in the whale;
 Or ef he's a slow-moulded cuss thet
 can't seem quite t' agree,
 He gits the noose by tellergraph upon
 the nighes' tree;
 Their mission-work with Afrikins hez
 put 'em up, thet 's sartin,
 To all the mos' across-lot ways o'
 preachin' an' convartin';
 I'll bet my hat th' ain't nary priest, nor
 all on 'em together,
 Thet cairns conviction to the min' like
 Reveren' Taranfeather;
 Why, he sot up with me one night, an'
 labored to sech purpose,
 Thet (ez an owl by daylight 'mongst a
 flock o' teazin' chirpers
 Sees clearer 'n mud the wickedness o'
 eatin' little birds)
 I see my error an' agreed to shen it
 arterwurds.

An' I should say, (to judge our folks by
facts in my possession,)

Thet three's Unannermous where one's

a 'Riginal Secession ;

So it 's a thing you fellers North may

safely bet your chink on,

Thet we 're all water-proofed agin th'

usurpin' reign o' Lincoln.

Jeff's *some*. He 's gut another plan

thet hez pertic'lar merits,

In givin' things a cherfle look an' stiff-

nin' loose-hung sperits ;

For while your million papers, wut with

lyin' an' discussin',

Keep folks's tempers all on eend a-fu-

min' an' a-fussin',

A-wondrin' this an' guessin' thet, an'

dreadin' every night,

The breechin' o' the Univarse 'll break

afore it 's light,

Our papers don't purtend to print on'y

wut Guv'ment choose,

An' thet insures us all to git the very

best o' noose :

Jeff hez it of all sorts an' kines, an'

sarves it out ez wanted,

So 's 't every man gits wut he likes an'

nobody ain't scanted ;

Sometimes it 's vict'ries, (they 're 'bout

all ther' is that 's cheap down here,)

Sometimes it 's France an' England on

the jump to interfere.

Fact is, the less the people know o' wut

ther' is a-doin',

The hendier 't is for Guv'ment, sence

it henders trouble brewin' ;

An' noose is like a shiplaster, — it 's

good, ef you believe it,

Or, wut 's all same, the other man thet

's goin' to receive it :

Ef you 've a son in th' army, wy, it 's

comfortin' to hear

He 'll hev no gretter resk to run than

seein' th' in'my's rear,

Coz, ef an F. F. looks at 'em, they

ollers break an' run,

Or wilt right down ez debtors will thet

stumble on a dun

(An' this, ef an'thin', proves the wuth o'

proper fen'ly pride,

Fer sech mean shucks ez creditors are

all on Lincoln's side) ;

Ef I hev scrip thet wun't go off no

more 'n a Beigin rifle,

An' read thet it 's at par on 'Change, it

makes me feel deli'fle ;

It 's cheerin', tu, where every man mus'

fortify his bed,

To hear thet Freedom 's the one thing

our darkies mos'ly dread,

An' thet experunce, time 'n' agin, to

Dixie's Land hez shown

Ther' 's nothin' like a powder-cask f'r

a stiddy corner-stone ;

Ain't it ez good ez nuts, when salt is

sellin' by the ounce

For its own weight in Treash'ry-bons,

(ef bought in small amounts,)

When even whiskey 's gittin' skurce

an' sugar can't be found,

To know thet all the ellerments o' lux-

ury abound ?

An' don't it glorify sal'-pork, to come

to understand

It 's wut the Richmon' editors call fat-

ness o' the land !

Nex' thing to knowin' you 're well off

is *nut* to know when y' ain't ;

An' ef Jeff says all 's goin' wal, who 'll

ventur' t' say it ain't ?

This cairn the Constitooshun roun' ez

Jeff doos in his hat

Is hendier a dresse sight, an' comes

more kin' o' pat.

I tell ye wut, my judgment is you 're

pooty sure to fail,

Ez long 'z the head keeps turnin' back

for counsel to the tail :

Th' advantages of our consarn for bein'

prompt air gret,

While, 'long o' Congress, you can't

strike, 'f you git an iron het ;

They bother roun' with argoin', an'

var'ous sorts o' foolin',

To make sure ef it 's leg'ly het, an' all

the while it 's coolin',

So 's 't when you come to strike, it ain't

no gret to wish ye j'y on,

An' hurts the hamnier 'z much or more

ez wut it doos the iron,

Jeff don't allow no jawin'-sprees for

three months at a stretch,

Knowin' the ears long speches suits

air mostly made to metch ;

He jes' ropes in your tonguey chaps

an' reg'lar ten-inch bores

An' lets 'em play at Congress. ef they 'll

du it w'th closed doors.

So they ain't no more bothersome than
 ef we 'd took an' sunk 'em,
 An' yit enjy th' exclusive right to one
 another's Buncombe
 'Thout doin' nobody no hurt, an' 'thout
 its costin' nothin',
 Their pay bein' jes' Confedit funds,
 they findin' keep an' clothin';
 They taste the sweets o' public life, an'
 plan their little jobs,
 An' suck the Treash'ry, (no gret harm,
 for it 's ez dry ez cobs,)
 An' go thru all the motions jest ez safe
 ez in a prison,
 An' hev their business to themselves,
 while Buregard hez hisn ;
 Ez long 'z he gives the Hessians fits,
 committees can't make bother
 'Bout whether 't 's done the legle way
 or whether 't 's done the t'other.
 An' I tell you you 've gut to larn that
 War ain't one long teeter
 Betwixt *I wun' to an' I wun't du*, de-
 batin' like a skeetur
 Afore he lights, — all is, to give the
 other side a millin',
 An' arter that 's done, th' ain't no resk
 but wut the lor 'll be willin' ;
 No metter wut the guv'ment is, ez
 nigh ez I can hit it,
 A lickin' 's constitooshunal, pervidin'
We don't git it.
 Jeff don't stan' dilly-dallyin', afore he
 takes a fort,
 (With no one in,) to git the leave o'
 the nex' Soopreme Court,
 Nor don't want forty-'leven weeks o'
 ' jawin' an' expoundin'
 To prove a nigger hez a right to save
 him, ef he 's drowndin' ;
 Whereas ole Abram 'd sink afore he 'd
 let a darkie boost him,
 Ef Taney should n't come along an'
 hed n't interdooced him.
 It ain't your twenty millions thet 'll
 ever block Jeff's game,
 But one Man thet wun't let 'em jog
 jest ez he 's takin' aim :
 Your numbers they may strengthen ye
 or weaken ye, ez 't heppens
 They 're willin' to be helpin' hands or
 wuss'n-nothin' cap'ns.

I 've chose my side, an' 't ain't no odds
 ef I wuz drawed with magnets,

Or ef I thought it prudenter to jine the
 nighes' bagnets ;
 I 've made my ch'ice, an' ciphered out,
 from all I see an' heard,
 Th' ole Constitooshun never 'd git her
 decks for action cleared,
 Long 'z you elect for Congressmen poor
 shotes thet want to go
 Coz they can't seem to git their grub no
 otherways than so,
 An' let your bes' men stav to home coz
 they wun't show ez talkers,
 Nor can't be hired to fool ye an' sof-
 soap ye at a caucus, —
 Long 'z ye set by Rotashun more 'n ye
 do by folks's merits,
 Ez though experunce thriv by change
 o' sile, like corn an' kerrits, —
 Long 'z you allow a critter's " claims " 't
 coz, spite o' shoves an' tippins,
 He 's kep' his private pan jest where 't
 would ketch mos' public drip-
 pins, —
 Long 'z A. 'll turn tu an' grin' B.'s exe,
 ef B. 'll help him grin' hisn,
 (An' thet 's the main idee by which
 your leadin' men hev risen,) —
 Long 'z you let *ary* exe be groun', 'less
 't is to cut the weasan'
 O' sneaks thet dunno till they 're told
 wut is an' wut ain't Treason, —
 Long 'z ye give out commissions to a
 lot o' peddlin' drones
 Thet trade in whiskey with their men
 an' skin 'em to their bones, —
 Long 'z ye sift out " safe " canderdates
 thet no one ain't afearod on
 Coz they 're so thund'rin' eminent for
 bein' never heard on,
 An' hain't no record, ez it 's called, for
 folks to pick a hole in,
 Ez ef it hurt a man to hev a body with
 a soul in,
 An' it wuz ostentashun to be showin'
 on 't about,
 When half his feller-citizens contrive to
 do without, —
 Long 'z you suppose your votes can
 turn biled kebbage into brain,
 An' ary man thet 's pop'lar 's fit to drive
 a lightnin'-train, —
 Long 'z you believe democracy means
I 'm ez good ez you be,
 An' that a feller from the ranks can't
 be a knave or booby, —

Long 'z Congress seems purvided, like
 yer street-cars an' yer 'busses,
 With ollers room for jes' one more o'
 your spiled-in-bakin' cusses,
 Dough 'thout the emptins of a soul, an'
 yit with means about 'em
 (Like essence-peddlers *) thet 'll make
 folks long to be without 'em,
 Jest heavy 'nough to turn a scale thet 's
 doubtfle the wrong way,
 An' make their nat'ral arsenal o' bein'
 nasty pay, —
 Long 'z them things last, (an' I don't
 see no gret signs of improvin',)
 Isha'n't up stakes, not hardly yit, nor 't
 would n't pay for movin';
 For, 'fore you lick us, it'll be the
 long'st day ever you see.
 Yourn, (ez I 'xpec' to be nex' spring,)
 B., MARKISS O' BIG BOOSY.

No. IV.

A MESSAGE OF JEFF DAVIS
IN SECRET SESSION.

Conjecturally reported by H. BIGLOW.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 10th March, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — My leisure has been so entirely occupied with the hitherto fruitless endeavour to decypher the Runick inscription whose fortunate discovery I mentioned in my last communication, that I have not found time to discuss, as I had intended, the great problem of what we are to do with slavery, — a topik on which the publick mind in this place is at present more than ever agitated. What my wishes and hopes are I need not say, but for safe conclusions I do not conceive that we are yet in possession of facts enough on which to bottom them with certainty. Acknowledging the hand of Providence, as I do, in all events, I am sometimes inclined to think that they are wiser

* A rustic euphemism for the American variety of the *Mephitis*. H. W.

than we, and am willing to wait till we have made this continent once more a place where freemen can live in security and honour, before assuming any further responsibility. This is the view taken by my neighbour Habakkuk Sio-ansure, Esq., the president of our bank, whose opinion in the practical affairs of life has great weight with me, as I have generally found it to be justified by the event, and whose counsel, had I followed it, would have saved me from an unfortunate investment of a considerable part of the painful economies of half a century in the Northwest-Passage Tunnel. After a somewhat animated discussion with this gentleman, a few days since, I expanded, on the *audi alteram partem* principle, something which he happened to say by way of illustration, into the following fable.

FESTINALENTE.

ONCE on a time there was a pool
 Fringed all about with flag-leaves cool
 And spotted with cow-lilies garish,
 Of frogs and pouts the ancient parish.
 Alders the creak'ng redwings sink on,
 Tussocks that house biithe Bob o' Lincoln
 Hedged round the unassailed seclusion,
 Where muskrats piled their cells Carthusian;
 And many a moss-embroidered log,
 The watering-place of summer frog,
 Slept and decayed with patient skill,
 As watering-places sometimes will.

Now in this Abbey of Theleme,
 Which realized the fairest dream
 That ever dozing bull-frog had,
 Sunned on a half-sunk lily-pad,
 There rose a party with a mission
 To mend the polliwogs' condition,
 Who notified the selectmen
 To call a meeting there and then.
 "Some kind of steps," they said, "are
 needed;
 They don't come on so fast as we did:
 Let 's dock their tails; if that don't make 'em
 Frogs by brevet, the Old One take 'em!
 That boy, that came the other day
 To dig some flag-root down this way,
 His jack-knife left, and 't is a sign
 That Heaven approves of our design:
 'T were wicked not to urge the step on,
 When Providence has sent the weapon."

Old croakers, deacons of the mire,
 That led the deep batrachian choir,
 Uk! Uk! Caronk! with bass that might

Have left Lablache's out of sight,
Shook nobby heads, and said, "No go!
You'd better let 'em try to grow:
Old Doctor Time is slow, but still
He does know how to make a pill."

But vain was all their hoarsest bass,
Their old experience out of place,
And spite of croaking and entreating.
The vote was carried in marsh-meeting.

"Lord knows," protest the polliwogs,
"We're anxious to be grown-up frogs;
But do not undertake the work
Of Nature till she prove a shirk;
'T is not by jumps that she advances,
But wins her way by circumstances:
Pray, wait awhile, until you know
We're so contrived as not to grow;
Let Nature take her own direction,
And she'll absorb our imperfection;
You might n't like 'em to appear with,
But we must have the things to steer with."

"No," piped the party of reform,
"All great results are ta'en by storm;
Fate holds her best gifts till we show
We've strength to make her let them go;
The Providence that works in history,
And seems to some folks such a mystery,
Does not creep slowly on *incog.*,
But moves by jumps, a mighty frog;
No more reject the Age's chrism,
Your queues are an anachronism;
No more the Future's promise mock,
But lay your tails upon the block,
Thankful that we the means have voted
To have you thus to frogs promoted."

The thing was done, the tails were cropped,
And home each philotadpole hopped,
In faith rewarded to exult,
And wait the beautiful result.
Too soon it came; our pool, so long
The theme of patriot bull-frog's song,
Next day was reeking, fit to smother,
With heads and tails that missed each other,—
Here snoutless tails, there tailless snouts;
The only gainers were the pouts.

MORAL.

From lower to the higher next,
Not to the top, is Nature's text;
And embryo Good, to reach full stature,
Absorbs the Evil in its nature.

I think that nothing will ever give permanent peace and security to this continent but the extirpation of Slavery therefrom, and that the occasion is nigh; but I would do nothing hastily or vindictively, nor presume to jog the elbow of Providence. No desperate

measures for me till we are sure that all others are hopeless, — *flectere si nequeo SUPEROS, Acheronta movebo*. To make Emancipation a reform instead of a revolution is worth a little patience, that we may have the Border States first, and then the non-slaveholders of the Cotton States, with us in principle, — a consummation that seems to be nearer than many imagine. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*, is not to be taken in a literal sense by statesmen, whose problem is to get justice done with as little jar as possible to existing order, which has at least so much of heaven in it that it is not chaos. Our first duty toward our enslaved brother is to educate him, whether he be white or black. The first need of the free black is to elevate himself according to the standard of this material generation. So soon as the Ethiopian goes in his chariot, he will find not only Apostles, but Chief Priests and Scribes and Pharisees willing to ride with him.

Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.

I rejoice in the President's late Message, which at last proclaims the Government on the side of freedom, justice, and sound policy.

As I write, comes the news of our disaster at Hampton Roads. I do not understand the supineness which, after fair warning, leaves wood to an unequal conflict with iron. It is not enough merely to have the right on our side, if we stick to the old flint-lock of tradition. I have observed in my parochial experience (*haud ignarus mali*) that the Devil is prompt to adopt the latest inventions of destructive warfare, and may thus take even such a three-decker as Bishop Butler as an advantage. It is curious, that, as gunpowder made armour useless on shore, so armour is having its revenge by baffling its old enemy at sea, — and that, while gunpowder robbed land warfare of nearly all its picturesqueness to give even greater stateliness and sublimity to a sea-fight, armour bids fair to degrade the

latter into a squabble between two iron-shelled turtles.

Yours, with esteem and respect,
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

P. S. — I had wellnigh forgotten to say that the object of this letter is to enclose a communication from the gifted pen of Mr. Biglow.

I SENT you a messige, my friends, t'other day,
To tell you I 'd nothin' pertickler to say :
'T wuz the day our new nation gut kin' o' stillborn,
So 't wuz my pleasant dooty t' acknowledge the corn,
An' I see clearly then, ef I did n't before,
Thet the *augur* in inauguration means *bore*.

I need n't tell *you* thet my messige wuz written
To diffuse correc^t notions in France an' Gret Britten,
An' agin to impress on the poppylar mind
The comfort an' wisdom o' goin' it blind, —

To say thet I did n't abate not a hooter O' my faith in a happy an' glorious futur',
Ez rich in each soshle an' p'litickler blessin'
Ez them thet we now hed the joy o' possessin'.

With a people united, an' longin' to die
For wut *we* call their country, without askin' why,
An' all the gret things we concluded to slope for
Ez much within reach now ez ever — to hope for.

We 've gut all the ellerments, this very hour,
Thet make up a fus'-class, self-governin' power :

We 've a war, an' a debt, an' a flag ; an' ef this
Ain't to be independunt, why, wut on airth is?
An' nothin' now henders our takin' our station

Ez the freest, enlightenedest, civerlized nation,
Built up on our bran'-new politickler thesis

Thet a Gov'ment's fust right is to tumble to pieces, —

I say nothin' henders our takin' our place

Ez the very fus'-best o' the whole human race,

A spittin' tobacker ez proud ez you please

On Victory's bes' carpets, or loafin' at ease

In the Tool'ries front-parlor, discussin' affairs

With our heels on the backs o' Napoleon's new chairs,

An' princes a-mixin' our cocktails an' slings, —

Excep', wal, excep' jest a very few things,

Sech ez navies an' armies an' where-with to pay,

An' gittin' our sogers to run t'other way,

An' not be too over-pertickler in tryin' To hunt up the very las' ditches to die in.

Ther' are critters so base thet they want it explained

Jes' wut is the totle amount thet we 've gained,

Ez ef we could maysure stupenjiuous events

By the low Yankee stan'ard o' dollars an' cents :

They seem to forgit, thet, sence last year revolved,

We 've succeeded in gittin' seceshed an' dissolved,

An' thet no one can't hope to git thru dissolootion

'Thout some kin' o' strain on the best Constitootion.

Who asks for a prospec' more flettrin' an' bright,

When from here clean to Texas it's all one free fight?

Hain't we rescued from Seward the gret leadin' featur

Thet makes it wuth while to be reasonin' creaturs?

Hain't we saved Habus Coppers, im-
proved it in fact,
By suspendin' the Unionists 'stid o' the
Act?
Ain't the laws free to all? Where on
airth else d' ye see
Every freeman improvin' his own rope
an' tree?
Ain't our piety sech (in our speeches an'
messiges)
Ez t' astonish ourselves in the bes-
composed pessiges,
An' to make folks that knowed us in th'
ole state o' things
Think convarson ez easy ez drinkin'
gin-slings?

It's ne'ssary to take a good confident
tone
With the public; but here, jest amongst
us, I own
Things look blacker 'n thunder. Ther'
's no use denyin'
We're clean out o' money, an' 'most
out o' lyin', —
Two things a young nation can't men-
nage without,
Ef she wants to look wal at her fust
comin' out;
For the fust supplies physickle strength,
while the second
Gives a morril edvantage thet's hard to
be reckoned:
For this latter I'm willin' to du wut I
can;
For the former you'll hev to consult on
a plan, —
Though our *fust* want (an' this pint I
want your best views on)
Is plausible paper to print I. O. U. s on.
Some gennlemen think it would cure
all our cankers
In the way o' finance, ef we jes' hanged
the bankers;
An' I own the proposle 'ud square with
my views,
Ef their lives wuz n't all thet we'd left
'em to lose.
Some say thet more confidence might
be inspired,
Ef we voted our cities an' towns to be
fired, —
A plan thet 'ud suttently tax our en-
durance,

Coz 't would be our own bills we
should git for th' insurance;
But cinders, no metter how sacred we
think 'em,
Might n't strike furrin minds ez good
sources of income,
Nor the people, perhaps, would n't
like the eclaw
O' bein' all turned into paytriots by
law.
Some want we should buy all the cotton
an' burn it,
On a pledge, when we've gut thru the
war, to return it, —
Then to take the proceeds an' hold
them ez security
For an issue o' bonds to be met at
maturity
With an issue o' notes to be paid in
hard cash
On the fus' Monday follerin' the 'tarnal
Allsmash:
This hez a safe air, an', once hold o' the
gold,
'Ud leave our vile plunderers out in the
cold,
An' *might* temp' John Bull, ef it warn't
for the dip he
Once gut from the banks o' my own
Massissippi.
Some think we could make, by arrangin'
the figgers,
A hendy home-currency out of our
niggers;
But it wun't du to lean much on ary
sech staff,
For they're gittin' tu current a'ready,
by half.
One gennleman says, ef we lef' our
loan out
Where Floyd could git hold on 't, *he'd*
take it, no doubt;
But 't ain't jes' the takin', though 't
hez a good look,
We mus' git sunthin' out on it arter
it's took.
An' we need now more 'n ever, with
sorrer I own,
Thet some one another should let us
a loan,
Sence a soger wun't fight, on'y jes'
while he draws his
Pay down on the nail, for the best of
all causes,

'Thout askin' to know wut the quarrel 's
 about, —
 An' once come to thet, why, our game
 is played out.
 It 's ez true ez though I should n't
 never hev said it,
 Thet a hitch hez took place in our
 system o' credit ;
 I swear it 's all right in my speeches an'
 messages,
 But ther' 's idees afloat, ez ther' is
 about sessiges :
 Folks wun't take a bond ez a basis to
 trade on,
 Without nosin' round to find out wut
 it 's made on,
 An' the thought more an' more thru
 the public min' crosses
 Thet our 'Treshry hez gut 'mos' too
 many dead hosses.
 Wut 's called credit, you see, is some
 like a balloon,
 Thet looks while it 's up 'most ez harn-
 some 'z a moon,
 But once git a leak in 't an' wut looked
 so grand
 Caves righ' down in a jiffy ez flat ez
 your hand.
 Now the world is a dreffle mean place,
 for our sins,
 Where ther' ollus is critters about with
 long pins
 A-prickin' the bubbles we 've blowed
 with sech care,
 An' provin' ther' 's nothin' inside but
 bad air :
 They 're all Stuart Millses, poor-white
 trash, an' sneaks,
 Without no more chivverlry 'n Choc-
 taws or Creeks,
 Who think a real gennleman's promise
 to pay
 Is meant to be took in trade's ornery way :
 Them fellers an' I could n' never agree ;
 They 're the nateral foes o' the Southun
 Idee ;
 I 'd gladly take all of our other resks on
 me
 To be red o' this low-lived politikle
 'con'my !
 Now a dastardly notion is gittin' about
 Thet our bladder is bust an' the gas
 ooizin' out,

An' unless we can mennage in some
 way to stop it,
 Why, the thing 's a gone coon, an' we
 might ez wal drop it.
 Brag works wal at fust, but it ain't jes'
 the thing
 For a stiddy inves'ment the shiners to
 bring,
 An' votin' we 're prosp'rous a hundred
 times over
 Wun't change bein' starved into livin'
 on clover.
 Manassas done sunthin' tow'rds drawin'
 the wool
 O'er the green, antislavery eyes o'
 John Bull :
 Oh, warn't it a godsend, jes' when
 sech tight fixes
 Wuz crowdin' us mourners, to throw
 double-sixes !
 I wuz tempted to think, an' it wuz n't
 no wonder,
 Ther' wuz reelly a Providence, — over
 or under, —
 When, all packed for Nashville, I fust
 ascertained
 From the papers up North wut a
 victory we 'd gained.
 'T wuz the time for diffusin' correc'
 views abroad
 Of our union an' strength an' relyin' on
 God ;
 An', fact, when I 'd gut thru my fust
 big surprise,
 I much ez half b'lieved in my own
 tallest lies,
 An' conveyed the idee thet the whole
 Southun popperlace
 Wuz Spartans all on the keen jump for
 Thermopperlies,
 Thet set on the Lincolnites' bombs till
 they bust,
 An' fight for the priv'lege o' dyin' the
 fust ;
 But Roanoke, Bufort, Millspring, an'
 the rest
 Of our recent starn-foremost successes
 out West,
 Hain't left us a foot for our swellin' to
 stand on, —
 We 've showed *too* much o' wut Bure-
 gard calls *abandon*,
 For all our Thermopperlies (an' it 's a
 marcy

We hain't hed no more) hev ben clean
vicy-varsy,
An' wut Spartans wuz ief' when the
battle wuz done
Wuz them thet wuz too unambitious to
run.

Oh, ef we hed ou'y jes' gut Reecog-
nition,
Things now would ha' ben in a different
position!

You 'd ha' hed all you wanted: the
paper blockade
Smashed up into toothpicks, — un-
limited trade

In the one thing thet 's needfle, till
niggers, I swow,
Hed ben thicker 'n provisional shin-
plasters now, —

Quinine by the ton 'ginst the shakes
when they seize ye, —

Nice paper to coin into C. S. A. specie;
The voice of the driver 'd be heard in
our land,

An' the univarse scringe, ef we lifted
our hand:

Would n't *thet* be some like a fulfillin'
the prophecies,

With all the fus' fem'lies in all the fust
offices?

'T wuz a beautiful dream, an' all sorer
is idle, —

But *ef* Lincoln *would* ha' hanged Ma-
son an' Slidell!

For would n't the Yankees hev found
they 'd ketched Tartars,

Ef they 'd raised two sech critters as
them into martyrs?

Mason *wuz* F. F. V., though a cheap
card to win on,

But t'other was jes' New York trash to
begin on;

They ain't o' no good in Européan
pellices,

But think wut a help they 'd ha' ben
on their gallowses!

They 'd ha' felt they wuz truly fulfillin'
their mission,

An', oh, how dog-cheap we 'd ha' gut
Reecognition!

But somehow another, wutever we 've
tried,

Though the the'ry 's fust-rate, the facts
wun't coincide:

Facts are contrary 'z mules, an' ez hard
in the mouth,
An' they allus hev showed a mean spite
to the South.

Sech bein' the case, we hed best look
about

For some kin' o' way to slip *our* necks
out:

Le' 's vote our las' dollar, ef one can be
found,

(An', at any rate, votin' it hez a good
sound,) —

Le' 's swear thet to arms all our people
is flyin',

(The critters can't read, an' wun't know
how we 're lyin',) —

Thet Toombs is advancin' to sack Cin-
cinnater,

With a rovin' commission to pillage an'
slahter, —

Thet we 've throwed to the winds all
regard for wut 's lawfle,

An' gone in for sunthin' promiscu'sly
awfle.

Ye see, hitherto, it 's our own knaves
an' fools

Thet we 've used, (those for whetstones,
an' t'others ez tools,)

An' now our las' chance is in puttin' to
test

The same kin' o' cattle up North an'
out West, —

Your Belmonts, Vallandighams, Woods-
es, an' sech,

Poor shotes thet ye could n't persuade
us to tech,

Not in ornery times, though we 're
willin' to feed 'em

With a nod now an' then, when we
happen to need 'em;

Why, for my part, I 'd ruther shake
hands with a nigger

Than with cusses that load an' don't
darst dror a trigger;

They 're the wust wooden nutmegs the
Yankees produce,

Shaky everywheres else, an' jes' sound
on the goose;

They ain't wuth a cuss, an' I set noth-
in' by 'em,

But we 're in sech a fix thet I s'pose we
mus' try 'em.

I — But, Gennlemen, here 's a de-
spatch jes' come in

Which shows the tide's begun turn-
 in' agin, —
 Gret Cornfedrit success! C'lumbus
 eevacoated!
 I mus' run down an' hev the thing prop-
 erly stated,
 An' show wut a triumph it is, an' how
 lucky
 To fin'ly git red o' thet cussed Ken-
 tucky, —
 An' how, sence Fort Donelson, winnin'
 the day
 Consists in triumphantly gittin' away.

No. V.

SPEECH OF HONOURABLE
 PRESERVED DOE IN SE-
 CRET CAUCUS.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC
 MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 12th April, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — As I cannot but hope that the ultimate, if not speedy, success of the national arms is now sufficiently ascertained, sure as I am of the righteousness of our cause and its consequent claim on the blessing of God, (for I would not show a faith inferior to that of the pagan historian with his *Facile evenit quod Dis cordi est,*) it seems to me a suitable occasion to withdraw our minds a moment from the confusing din of battle to objects of peaceful and permanent interest. Let us not neglect the monuments of preterite history because what shall be history is so diligently making under our eyes. *Cras ingens iterabimus æquor*; to-morrow will be time enough for that stormy sea; to-day let me engage the attention of your readers with the Runick inscription to whose fortunate discovery I have heretofore alluded. Well may we say with the poet, *Multa renascuntur quæ jam cecidere*. And I would premise, that, although I can no longer resist the evidence of my own senses from the stone before me to the

ante-Columbian discovery of this continent by the Northmen, *gens inclytissima*, as they are called in a Palermitan inscription, written fortunately in a less debatable character than that which I am about to decipher, yet I would by no means be understood as wishing to vilipend the merits of the great Genoese, whose name will never be forgotten so long as the inspiring strains of "Hail Columbia" shall continue to be heard. Though he must be stripped also of whatever praise may belong to the experiment of the egg, which I find proverbially attributed by Castilian authors to a certain Juanito or Jack, (perhaps an offshoot of our giant-killing mythus,) his name will still remain one of the most illustrious of modern times. But the impartial historian owes a duty likewise to obscure merit, and my solicitude to render a tardy justice is perhaps quickened by my having known those who, had their own field of labour been less secluded, might have found a readier acceptance with the reading publick. I could give an example, but I forbear: *forsitan nostris ex ossibus oritur ultor*.

Touching Runick inscriptions, I find that they may be classed under three general heads: 1°. Those which are understood by the Danish Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, and Professor Rafn, their Secretary; 2°. Those which are comprehensible only by Mr. Rafn; and 3°. Those which neither the Society, Mr. Rafn, nor anybody else can be said in any definite sense to understand, and which accordingly offer peculiar temptations to enucleating sagacity. These last are naturally deemed the most valuable by intelligent antiquaries, and to this class the stone now in my possession fortunately belongs. Such give a picturesque variety to ancient events, because susceptible oftentimes of as many interpretations as there are individual archæologists; and since facts are only the pulp in which the Idea or event-seed is softly imbedded till it ripen, it is of little consequence what colour or flavour we attribute to them, provided

it be agreeable. Availing myself of the obliging assistance of Mr. Arphaxad Bowers, an ingenious photographick artist, whose house-on-wheels has now stood for three years on our Meeting-House Green, with the somewhat contradictory inscription, — “*our motto is onward,*” — I have sent accurate copies of my treasure to many learned men and societies, both native and European. I may hereafter communicate their different and (*me judice*) equally erroneous solutions. I solicit also, Messrs. Editors, your own acceptance of the copy herewith inclosed. I need only premise further, that the stone itself is a goodly block of metamorphick sandstone, and that the Runes resemble very nearly the ornithichnites or fossil bird-tracks of Dr. Hitchcock, but with less regularity or apparent design than is displayed by those remarkable geological monuments. These are rather the *non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum*. Resolved to leave no door open to cavil, I first of all attempted the elucidation of this remarkable example of lithick literature by the ordinary modes, but with no adequate return for my labour. I then considered myself amply justified in resorting to that heroick treatment the felicity of which, as applied by the great Bentley to Milton, had long ago enlisted my admiration. Indeed, I had already made up my mind, that, in case good fortune should throw any such invaluable record in my way, I would proceed with it in the following simple and satisfactory method. After a cursory examination, merely sufficing for an approximative estimate of its length, I would write down a hypothetical inscription based upon antecedent probabilities, and then proceed to extract from the characters engraven on the stone a meaning as nearly as possible conformed to this *a priori* product of my own ingenuity. The result more than justified my hopes, inasmuch as the two inscriptions were made without any great violence to tally in all essential particulars. I then proceeded, not without some anxiety, to my second

test, which was, to read the Runick letters diagonally, and again with the same success. With an excitement pardonable under the circumstances, yet tempered with thankful humility, I now applied my last and severest trial, my *experimentum crucis*. I turned the stone, now doubly precious in my eyes, with scrupulous exactness upside down. The physical exertion so far displaced my spectacles as to derange for a moment the focus of vision. I confess that it was with some tremulousness that I readjusted them upon my nose, and prepared my mind to bear with calmness any disappointment that might ensue. But, *O albo dies notanda lapillo!* what was my delight to find that the change of position had effected none in the sense of the writing, even by so much as a single letter! I was now, and justly, as I think, satisfied of the conscientious exactness of my interpretation. It is as follows:—

HERE
BJARNA GRÍMOLFFSON
FIRST DRANK CLOUD-BROTHER
THROUGH CHILD-OF-LAND-AND-
WATER :

that is, drew smoke through a reed stem. In other words, we have here a record of the first smoking of the herb *Nicotiana Tabacum* by an European on this continent. The probable results of this discovery are so vast as to baffle conjecture. If it be objected, that the smoking of a pipe would hardly justify the setting up of a memorial stone, I answer, that even now the Moquis Indian, ere he takes his first whiff, bows reverently toward the four quarters of the sky in succession, and that the loftiest monuments have been reared to perpetuate fame, which is the dream of the shadow of smoke. The *Saga*, it will be remembered, leaves this Bjarna to a fate something like that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, on board a sinking ship in the “wormy sea,” having generously given up his place in the boat to a certain Icelander. It is doubly pleasant, therefore, to meet with this proof that the brave old man arrived

safely in Vinland, and that his declining years were cheered by the respectful attentions of the dusky denizens of our then uninvaded forests. Most of all was I gratified, however, in thus linking forever the name of my native town with one of the most momentous occurrences of modern times. Hitherto Jaalam, though in soil, climate, and geographical position as highly qualified to be the theatre of remarkable historical incidents as any spot on the earth's surface, has been, if I may say it without seeming to question the wisdom of Providence, almost maliciously neglected, as it might appear, by occurrences of world-wide interest in want of a situation. And in matters of this nature it must be confessed that adequate events are as necessary as the *vates sacer* to record them. Jaalam stood always modestly ready, but circumstances made no fitting response to her generous intentions. Now, however, she assumes her place on the historick roll. I have hitherto been a zealous opponent of the Circean herb, but I shall now re-examine the question without bias.

I am aware that the Rev. Jonas Tutchel, in a recent communication to the Bogus Four Corners Weekly Meridian, has endeavoured to show that this is the sepulchral inscription of Thorwald Eriksson, who, as is well known, was slain in Vinland by the natives. But I think he has been misled by a preconceived theory, and cannot but feel that he has thus made an ungracious return for my allowing him to inspect the stone with the aid of my own glasses (he having by accident left his at home) and in my own study. The heathen ancients might have instructed this Christian minister in the rites of hospitality; but much is to be pardoned to the spirit of self-love. He must indeed be ingenious who can make out the words *hær hvilir* from any characters in the inscription in question, which, whatever else it may be, is certainly not mortuary. And even should the reverend gentleman succeed in persuading some fantastical

wits of the soundness of his views, I do not see what useful end he will have gained. For if the English Courts of Law hold the testimony of grave-stones from the burial-grounds of Protestant dissenters to be questionable, even where it is essential in proving a descent, I cannot conceive that the epitaphial assertions of heathens should be esteemed of more authority by any man of orthodox sentiments.

At this moment, happening to cast my eyes upon the stone, on which a transverse light from my southern window brings out the characters with singular distinctness, another interpretation has occurred to me, promising even more interesting results. I hasten to close my letter in order to follow at once the clew thus providentially suggested.

I inclose, as usual, a contribution from Mr. Biglow, and remain,

Gentlemen, with esteem and respect,
Your Obedient Humble Servant,
HOMER WILBUR, A. M.

I THANK ye, my friends, for the warmth
o' your greetin' ;
Ther' 's few airthly blessins but wut 's
vain an' fletin' ;
But ef ther' is one thet hain't *no* cracks
an' flaws,
An' is wuth goin' in for, it 's pop'lar
applause ;
It sends up the sperits ez lively ez
rockets.
An' I feel it — wal, down to the eend o'
my pockets.
Jes' lovin' the people is Canaan in
view,
But it's Canaan paid quarterly t' hev
'em love you ;
It 's a blessin' thet 's breakin' out ollus
in fresh spots ;
It 's a-follerin' Moses 'thout losin' the
flesh-pots.
But, Gennlemen, 'scuse me, I ain't
sech a raw cus
Ez to go luggin' ellerkence into a
caucus, —
Thet is, into one where the call com-
prehends

Nut the People in person, but on'y
 their friends;
 I'm so kin' o' used to convincin' the
 masses
 Of th' advantage o' bein' self-governin'
 asses,
 I forgut thet *we* 're all o' the sort thet
 pull wivs
 An' arrange for the public their wants
 an' desires,
 An' thet wut we hed met for wuz jes' to
 agree
 Wut the People's opinions in futur'
 should be.

Now, to come to the nub, we 've ben
 all disappointed,
 An' our leadin' idees are a kind o' dis-
 jointed, —
 Though, fur ez the nateral man could
 discern,
 Things ough' to ha' took most an op-
 ersite turn.
 But The'ry is jes' like a train on the
 rail,
 Thet, weather or no, puts her thru with-
 out fail,
 While Fac's the ole stage thet gits
 sloughed in the ruts,
 An' hez to allow for your darned efs an'
 buts,
 An' so, nut intendin' no pers'nal re-
 flections,
 They don't — don't nut allus, thet is, —
 make connections:
 Sometimes, when it really doos seem
 thet they 'd oughter
 Combine jest ez kindly ez new rum an'
 water,
 Both 'll be jest ez sot in their ways ez a
 bagnet,
 Ez otherwise-minded ez th' eends of a
 magnet,
 An' folks like you 'n' me, thet ain't ept
 to be sold,
 Git somehow or 'nother left out in
 the cold.

I expected 'fore this, 'thout no gret of a
 row,
 Jeff D. would ha' ben where A. Lincoln
 is now,
 With Taney to say 't wuz all leg'le an'
 fair.

An' a jury o' Deemocrats ready to
 swear
 Thet the ingin o' State gut throwed into
 the ditch
 By the fault o' the North in misplacin'
 the switch.
 Things wuz ripenin' fust-rate with
 Buchanan to nuss 'em;
 But the People they would n't be Mex-
 icans, cuss 'em!
 Ain't the safeguards o' freedom upsot,
 'z you may say,
 Ef the right o' rev'lution is took clean
 away?
 An' doos n't the right primy-fashy in-
 clude
 The bein' entitled to nut be subdued?
 The fact is, we 'd gone for the Union so
 strong,
 When Union meant South ollus right
 an' North wrong,
 Thet the people gut fooled into thinkin'
 it might
 Worry on middlin' wal with the North
 in the right.
 We might ha' ben now jest ez prosp-
 p'rous ez France,
 Where p'litikle enterprise hez a fair
 chance,
 An' the people is heppy an' proud et
 this hour,
 Long ez they hev the votes, to let Nap
 hev the power;
 But *our* folks they went an' believed
 wut we 'd told 'em,
 An', the flag once insulted, no mortle
 could hold 'em
 'T wuz pervokin' jest when we wuz
 cert'in to win, —
 An' I, for one, wun't trust the masses
 agin:
 For a people thet knows much ain't fit
 to be free
 In the self-cockin', back-action style o'
 J. D.

I can't believe now but wut half on 't is
 lies;
 For who 'd thought the North wuz
 a-goin' to rise,
 Or take the pervokin'est kin' of a
 stump,
 'T'hou 't wuz smthin' ez pressir. ez
 Gab'el's 'as' 'rumf'

Or who d ha' supposed, arter *sech* swell
 an' bluster
 'Bout the lick-ary-ten-on-ye fighters
 they 'd muster,
 Raised by hand on briled lightnin', ez
 op'lent 'z you please
 In a primitive furrest o' femmily-
 trees, —
 Who 'd ha' thought thet them South-
 uners ever 'ud show
 Starns with pedigrees to 'em like theirn
 to the foe,
 Or, when the vamosin' come, ever to
 find
 Nat'ral masters in front an' mean white
 folks behind?
 By ginger, ef I 'd ha' known half I know
 now,
 When I wuz to Congress, I would n't, I
 swow,
 Hev let 'em cair on so high-minded an'
 sarsy,
 'Thout *some* show o' wut you may call
 vicy-varsy.
 To be sure, we wuz under a contrac' jes'
 then
 To be drefle forbearin' towards South-
 un men ;
 We hed to go sheers in preservin' the
 bellance :
 An' ez they seemed to feel they wuz
 wastin' their tellents
 'Thout some un to kick, 't warn't
 more 'n proper, you know,
 Each should funnish his part ; an' sence
 they found the toe,
 An' we wuz n't cherubs — wal, we found
 the buffer,
 For fear thet the Compromise System
 should suffer.

I wun't say the plan hed n't onpleasant
 featur, —
 For men are perverse an' onreasonin'
 creaturs,
 An' forgit thet in this life 't ain't likely
 to heppen
 Their own privit fancy should ollus be
 cappen, —
 But it worked jest ez smooth ez the key
 of a safe,
 An' the gret Union bearins played free
 from all chafe.
 They warn't hard to suit, ef they hed
 their own way ;

An' we (thet is, some on us) made the
 thing pay :
 'T wuz a fair give-an'-take out of Uncle
 Sam's heap ;
 Ef they took wut warn't theirn, wut we
 give come ez cheap ;
 The elect gut the offices down to tide-
 waiter,
 The people took skiunnin' ez mild ez a
 tater,
 Seemed to choose who they wanted tu,
 footed the bills.
 An' felt kind o' 'z though they wuz
 havin' their wills,
 Which kep' 'em ez harmless an' cherfle
 ez crickets,
 While all we invested wuz names on
 the tickets :
 Wal, ther' 's nothin', for folks fond o'
 lib'ral consumption
 Free o' charge, like democ'acy tem-
 pered with gumption !

Now warn't thet a system wuth pains
 in presarvin',
 Where the people found jints an' their
 friens done the carvin', —
 Where the many done all o' their
 thinkin' by proxy,
 An' were proud on 't ez long ez 't wuz
 christened Democ'cy, —
 Where the few let us sap all o' Free-
 dom's foundations,
 Ef you call it reformin' with prudence
 an' patience,
 An' were willin' Jeff's snake-egg should
 hetch with the rest,
 Ef you writ "Constitootional" over the
 nest?
 But it's all out o' kilter, ('t wuz too good
 to last,)
 An' all jes' by J. D.'s perceedin' too
 fast ;
 Ef he 'd on'y hung on for a month or
 two more,
 We 'd ha' gut things fixed nicer 'n they
 hed ben before :
 Afore he drawed off an' lef' all in con-
 fusion,
 We wuz safely entrenched in the ole
 Constitootion,
 With an outlyin', heavy-gun, casemated
 fort
 To rake all assailants, — I mean th'
 S. J. Court.

Now I never 'll acknowledge (nut ef
you should skin me)

'T wuz wise to abandon sech works to
the in'my,

An' let him fin' out thet wut scared him
so long,

Our whole line of argyments, lookin'
so strong,

All our Scriptur' an' law, every the'ry
an' fac',

Wuz Quaker-guns daubed with Pro-
slavery black.

Why, ef the Republicans ever should
git

Andy Johnson or some one to lend 'em
the wit

An' the spunk jes' to mount Constitoo-
tion an' Court

With Columbiad guns, your real ekle-
rights sort,

Or drill out the spike from the ole Dec-
laration

Thet can Kerry a solid shot clearn roun'
creation,

We 'd better take maysures for shettin'
up shop,

An' put off our stock by a vendoo or
swop.

But they wun't never dare tu; you 'll
see 'em in Edom

'Fore they ventur' to go where their
doctrines 'ud lead 'em;

They 've ben takin' our princerples up
ez we dropt 'em,

An' thought it wuz terrible 'cute to
adopt 'em;

But they 'll fin' out 'fore long thet their
hope 's ben deceivin' 'em,

An' thet princerples ain't o' no good,
ef you b'lieve in 'em;

It makes 'em tu stiff for a party to use,
Where they 'd ough' to be easy 'z an
ole pair o' shoes.

If *we* say 'n our pletform thet all men
are brothers,

We don't mean thet some folks ain't
more so 'n some others;

An' it 's wal understood thet we make
a selection,

An' thet brotherhood kin' o' subsides
arter 'lection.

The fust thing for sound politicians to
larn is,

Thet Truth, to dror kindly in all sorts
o' harness,

Mus' be kep' in the abstract,—for,
come to apply it,

You 're ept to hurt some folks's inter-
ists by it.

Wal, these 'ere Republicans (some on
'em) ects

Ez though general mexims 'ud suit
speshle facts;

An' there 's where we 'll nick 'em,
there 's where they 'll be lost:

For applyin' your princerple 's wut
makes it cost,

An' folks don't want Fourth o' July t'
interfere

With the business-consarns o' the rest
o' the year,

No more 'n they want Sunday to pry
an' to peek

Into wut they are doin' the rest o' the
week.

A ginooine statesman should be on his
guard,

Ef he *must* hev beliefs, nut to b'lieve
'em tu hard;

For, ez sure ez he does, he 'll be blar-
tin' 'em out

'Thout regardin' the natur' o' man
more 'i: a spout,

Nor it don't ask much gumption to
pick out a flaw

In a party whose leaders are loose in
the jaw:

An' so in our own case I ventur' to hint
Thet we 'd better nut air our perceed-
ins in print,

Nor pass resserlootions ez long ez your
arm

Thet may, ez things heppen to turn, do
us harm;

For when you've done all your real
meanin' to smother,

The darned things 'll up an' mean
sunthin' or 'nother.

Jeff'son prob'ly meant wal with his
"born free an' ekle,"

But it 's turned out a real crooked stick
in the sekle;

It 's taken full eighty-odd year — don't
you see? —

From the pop'lar belief to root out thet
idee,

An', arter all, suckers on 't keep buddin' forth
 In the nat'lly onprincipled mind o' the North.
 No, never say nothin' without you're compelled tu,
 An' then don't say nothin' thet you can be held tu,
 Nor don't leave no friction-idees layin' loose
 For the ign'ant to put to incend'ary use.

You know I'm a feller thet keeps a skinned eye
 On the leetle events thet go skurryin' by,
 Coz it's of'ner by them than by gret ones you 'll see
 Wut the p'litickle weather is likely to be.

Now I don't think the South 's more 'n begun to be licked,
 But I *du* think, ez Jeff says, the wind-bag 's gut pricked;
 It 'll blow for a spell an' keep puffin' an' wheezin',
 The tighter our army an' navy keep squeezein', —
 For they can't help spread-eaglein' long 'z ther' 's a mouth
 To blow Enfield's Speaker thru lef' at the South.
 But it 's high time for us to be settin' our faces
 Towards reconstructin' the national basis,
 With an eye to beginnin' agin on the jolly ticks
 We used to chalk up 'hind the back-door o' politics;
 An' the fus' thing 's to save wut of Slav'ry ther' 's lef'
 Arter this (I mus' call it) imprudence o' Jeff:
 For a real good Abuse, with its roots fur an' wide,
 Is the kin' o' thing I like to hev on my side;
 A Scriptur' name makes it ez sweet ez a rose,
 An' it 's tougher the older an' uglier it grows —
 (I ain't speakin' now c' the righteousness of it,

But the p'litickle purchase it gives an' the profit).

Things look pooty squally, it must be allowed,
 An' I don't see much signs of a bow in the cloud:
 Ther' 's too many Deemocrats — leaders wut 's wuss —
 Thet go for the Union 'thout carin' a cuss
 Ef it helps ary party thet ever wuz heard on,
 So our eagle ain't made a split Austrian bird on.
 But ther' 's still some consarvative signs to be found
 Thet shows the gret heart o' the People is sound:
 (Excuse me for usin' a stump-phrase agin,
 But, once in the way on 't, they *will* stick like sin :)
 There 's Phillips, for instance, hez jes' ketched a Tartar
 In the Law-'n'-Order Party of ole Cincinnati;
 An' the Compromise System ain't gone out o' reach,
 Long 'z you keep the right limits on freedom o' speech.
 'T warn't none too late, neither, to put on the gag,
 For he 's dangerous now he goes in for the flag
 Nut thet I altogether approve o' bad eggs,
 They're mos' gin'lly argymunt on its las' legs, —
 An' their logic is ept to be tu indiscriminate,
 Nor don't ollus wait the right objects to 'liminate;
 But there is a variety on 'em, you 'll find,
 Jest ez usefle an' more, besides bein' refined, —
 I mean o' the sort thet are laid by the dictionary,
 Sech ez sophisms an' cant, thet 'll kerry conviction ary
 Way thet you want to the right class o' men,
 As, are staler than all 't ever come from a hen :

"Disunion" done wal till our resh
 Southun friends
 Took the savor all out on 't for national
 ends ;
 But I guess "Abolition" 'll work a
 spell yit,
 When the war's done, an' so will
 "Forgive-an'-forgit."
 Times mus' be pooty thoroughly out o'
 all jint,
 Ef we can't make a good constitootional
 pint ;
 An' the good time 'll come to be
 grindin' our exes,
 When the war goes to seed in the nettle
 o' texes :
 Ef Jon'than don't squirm, with sech
 helps to assist him,
 I give up my faith in the free-suffrage
 system ;
 Democ'cy wun't be nut a mite inter-
 estin',
 Nor p'litikle capital much wuth in-
 vestin' ;
 An' my notion is, to keep dark an' lay
 low
 Till we see the right minute to put in
 our blow. —

 But I 've talked longer now 'n I hed
 any idee,
 An' ther' 's others you want to hear
 more 'n you du me ;
 So I 'll set down an' give thet 'ere
 bottle a skrimmage,
 For I 've spoke till I 'm dry ez a real
 graven image.

No. VI.

SUNTHIN' IN THE PASTORAL LINE.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 17th May, 1862.

GENTLEMEN, — At the special re-
 quest of Mr. Biglow, I intended to in-
 close, together with his own contribu-
 tion, (into which, at my suggestion, he

has thrown a little more of pastora
 sentiment than usual,) some passages
 from my sermon on the day of the Na-
 tional Fast, from the text, "Remember
 them that are in bonds, as bound with
 them," *Heb.* xiii. 3. But I have not
 leisure sufficient at present for the copy-
 ing of them, even were I altogether sat-
 isfied with the production as it stands.
 I should prefer, I confess, to contribute
 the entire discourse to the pages of
 your respectable miscellany, if it should
 be found acceptable upon perusal, es-
 pecially as I find the difficulty of selec-
 tion of greater magnitude than I had
 anticipated. What passes without
 challenge in the fervour of oral delivery,
 cannot always stand the colder criticism
 of the closet. I am not so great an en-
 emy of Eloquence as my friend Mr.
 Biglow would appear to be from some
 passages in his contribution for the cur-
 rent month. I would not, indeed,
 hastily suspect him of covertly glancing
 at myself in his somewhat caustick ani-
 madversions, albeit some of the phrases
 he girds at are not entire strangers
 to my lips. I am a more hearty ad-
 mirer of the Puritans than seems now
 to be the fashion, and believe, that, if
 they Hebraized a little too much in
 their speech, they showed remarkable
 practical sagacity as statesmen and
 founders. But such phenomena as Pu-
 ritanism are the results rather of great
 religious than merely social convul-
 sions, and do not long survive them.
 So soon as an earnest conviction has
 cooled into a phrase, its work is over,
 and the best that can be done with it is
 to bury it. *Ite, missa est.* I am in-
 clined to agree with Mr. Biglow that
 we cannot settle the great political
 questions which are now presenting
 themselves to the nation by the opin-
 ions of Jeremiah or Ezekiel as to the
 wants and duties of the Jews in their
 time, nor do I believe that an entire
 community with their feelings and
 views would be practicable or even
 agreeable at the present day. At the
 same time I could wish that their habit
 of subordinating the actual to the
 moral, the flesh to the spirit, and this

world to the other, were more common. They had found out, at least, the great military secret that soul weighs more than body. — But I am suddenly called to a sick-bed in the household of a valued parishioner.

With esteem and respect,
Your obedient servant,
HOMER WILBUR.



ONCE git a smell o' musk into a draw,
An' it clings hold like precedents in
law :

Your gra'ma'am put it there, — when,
goodness knows, —

To jes' this-worldify her Sunday-clo'es ;
But the old chist wun't sarve her gran'-
son's wife,

(For, 'thout new funnitooor, wut good in
life?)

An' so ole clawfoot, from the precinks
dread

O' the spare chamber, slinks into the
shed,

Where, dim with dust, it fust or last
subsides

To holdin' seeds an' fifty things be-
sides ;

But better days stick fast in heart an'
husk,

An' all you keep in 't gits a scent o'
musk.

Jes' so with poets : wut they've airly
read

Gits kind o' worked into their heart an'
head,

So 's 't they can't seem to write but jest
on sheers

With furrin countries or played-out
ideers,

Nor hev a feelin', ef it doos n't smack
O' wut some critter chose to feel 'way
back :

This makes 'em talk o' daisies, larks,
an' things,

Ez though we 'd nothin' here that
blows an' sings, —

(Why, I 'd give more for one live bobo-
link

Than a square mile o' larks in printer's
ink,) —

This makes 'em think our fust o' May
is May,

Which 't ain't, for all the almanicks can
say.

O little city-gals, don't never go it
Blind on the word o' noospaper or poet !
They 're apt to puff, an' May-day sel-
dom looks

Up in the country ez it doos in books ;
They 're no more like than hornets'-
nests an' hives,

Or printed saimons be to holy lives.

I, with my trouses perched on cow-
hide boots,

Tuggin' my foundered feet out by the
roots,

Hev seen ye come to fling on April's
hearse

Your muslin nose-gays from the mil-
liner's,

Puzzlin' to find dry ground your queen
to choose,

An' dance your throats sore in morock-
er shoes :

I've seen ye an' felt proud, thet, come
wut would,

Our Pilgrim stock wuz pithed with
hardihood.

Pleasure doos make us Yankees kind
o' winch,

Ez though 't wuz sunthin' paid for by
the inch ;

But yit we du contrive to worry thru,
Ef Dooty tells us thet the thing 's to
du,

An' kerry a hollerday, ef we set out,
Ez stiddily ez though 't wuz a redoubt.

I, country-born an' bred, know where
to find

Some blooms thet make the season suit
the mind,

An' seem to metch the doubtin' blue-
bird's notes, —

Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef
you oncurl,

Each on 'em 's cradle to a baby-pearl, —
But these are jes' Spring's pickets ;

sure ez sin,

The rebble frosts 'll try to drive 'em in ;
For half our May 's so awfully like
May n't,

'T would rile a Shaker or an evrige
 saint ;
 Though I own up I like our back'ard
 springs
 Thet kind o' haggel with their greens
 an' things,
 An' when you 'most give up, 'ithout
 more words
 Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves,
 an' birds :
 Thet 's Northun natur', slow an' apt to
 doubt,
 But when it *doos* git stirred, ther' 's no
 gin-out !

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in
 tall trees,
 An' settlin' things in windy Congress-
 es, —
 Queer politicians, though, for I 'll be
 skinned
 Ef all on 'em don't head against the
 wind.
 'Fore long the trees begin to show be-
 lief, —
 The maple crimsons to a coral-reef,
 Then saffern swarms swing off from all
 the willers
 So plump they look like yaller caterpil-
 lars,
 Then gray hossches'nuts leetle hands
 unfold
 Softer 'n a baby's be at three days old :
 Thet 's robin-redbreast's almanick ; he
 knows
 Thet arter this ther' 's only blossom-
 snows ;
 So, choosin' out a handy crotch an'
 spouse,
 He goes to plast'rin' his adobë house.

Then seems to come a hitch, — things
 lag behind,
 Till some fine mornin' Spring makes
 up her mind,
 An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh
 their dams
 Heaped-up with ice the dovetails in
 an' jams.
 A leak comes spirtin' thru some pin-
 hole cleft,
 Grows stronger, fercer, tears out right
 an' left,

Then all the waters bow themselves
 an' come,
 Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin'
 foam,
 Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in
 tune
 An' gives one leap from April into June :
 Then all comes crowdin' in ; afore you
 think,
 Young oak-leaves mist the side-hi'
 woods with pink ;
 The catbird in the laylock-bush is loud ;
 The orchards turn to heaps o' rosy
 cloud ;
 Red-cedars blossom tu, though few
 folks know it,
 An' look all dipt in sunshine like a
 poet ;
 The lime-trees pile their solid stacks o'
 shade
 An' drows'ly simmer with the bees'
 sweet trade ;
 In ellum-shrouds the flashin' hangbird
 clings
 An' for the summer vy'ge his ham-
 mock slings ;
 All down the loose-walled lanes in
 archin' bowers
 The barb'ry droops its strings o' golden
 flowers,
 Whose shrinkin' hearts the school-gals
 love to try
 With pins, — they 'll worry yourn so,
 boys, bimeby !
 But I don't love your cat'logue style, —
 do you ? —
 Ez ef to sell off Natur' by vendoo ;
 One word with blood in 't 's twice ez
 good ez two :
 'Nuff sed, June's bridesman, poet o'
 the year,
 Gladness on wings, the bobolink, is
 here ;
 Half-hid in tip-top apple-blooms he
 swings,
 Or climbs against the breeze with quiv-
 erin' wings,
 Or, givin' way to 't in a mock despair,
 Runs down, a brook o' laughter, thru
 the air.

I ollus feel the sap start in my veins
 In Spring, with curus heats an' prickly
 pain ;

Thet drive me, when I git a chance, to
 walk
 Off by myself to hev a privit talk
 With a queer critter thet can't seem to
 'gree
 Along o' me like most folks, — Mister
 Me.
 Ther' 's times when I 'm unsoshle ez a
 stone,
 An' sort o' suffocate to be alone, —
 I 'm crowded jes' to think thet folks are
 nigh,
 An' can't bear nothin' closer than the
 sky ;
 Now the wind 's full ez shifty in the
 mind
 Ez wut it is ou'-doors, ef I ain't blind,
 An' sometimes, in the fairest sou'west
 weather,
 My innard vane pints east for weeks
 together,
 My natur' gits all goose-flesh, an' my
 sins
 Come drizzlin' on my conscience sharp
 ez pins :
 Wal, et sech times I jes' slip out o'
 sight
 An' take it out in a fair stan'-up fight
 With the one cuss I can't lay on the
 shelf,
 The crook'dest stick in all the heap, —
 Myself.
 'T wuz so las' Sabbath arter meetin'-
 time :
 Findin' my feelin's would n't noways
 rhyme
 With nobody's, but off the hendle flew
 An' took things from an east-wind pint
 o' view,
 I started off to lose me in the hills
 Where the pines be, up back o' 'Siah's
 Mills :
 Pines, ef you 're blue, are the best friends
 I know,
 They mope an' sigh an' sheer your feel-
 in's so, —
 They hesh the ground beneath so, tu, I
 swan,
 You half-forgit you 've gut a body on.
 Ther' 's a small school'us' there where
 four roads meet,
 The door-steps hollered out by little
 feet,

An' side-posts carved with names whose
 owners grew
 To gret men, some on 'em, an' deacons,
 tu ;
 'T ain't used no longer, coz the town
 hez gut
 A high-school, where they teach the
 Lord knows wut :
 Three-story larnin' 's pop'lar now ; I
 guess
 We thriv' ez wal on jes' two stories
 less,
 For it strikes me ther' 's sech a thing
 ez sinnin'
 By overloadin' children's underpin-
 nin' :
 Wal, here it wuz I larned my A B C,
 An' it 's a kind o' favorite spot with
 me.
 We 're curus critters : Now ain't jes'
 the minute
 Thet ever fits us easy while we 're in
 it ;
 Long ez 't wuz futur', 't would be per-
 fect bliss, —
 Soon ez it 's past, *thet* time 's wuth ten
 o' this ;
 An' yit there ain't a man thet need be
 told
 Thet Now 's the only bird lays eggs o'
 gold.
 A knee-high lad, I used to plot an' plan
 An' think 't wuz life's cap-sheaf to be a
 man ;
 Now, gittin' gray, there 's nothin' I
 enjoy
 Like dreamin' back along into a boy :
 So the ole school'us' is a place I choose
 Afore all others, ef I want to muse ;
 I set down where I used to set, an' git
 My boyhood back, an' better things
 with it, —
 Faith, Hope, an' sunthin', ef it is n't
 Cherrity,
 It 's want o' guile, an thet 's ez gret a
 rerrity, —
 While Fancy's Cushin'. free to Prince
 and Clown,
 Makes the hard bench ez soft ez milk-
 weed-down.
 Now, 'fore I knowed, thet Sabbath
 arternoon

Thet I sot out to tramp myself in tune,
I found me in the school'us' on my
seat,

Drummin' the march to No-wheres with
my feet.

Thinkin' o' nothin', I've heerd ole
folks say

Is a hard kind o' dooty in its way :
It's thinkin' everythin' you ever knew,
Or ever hearn, to make your feelin's
blue.

I sot there tryin' thet on for a spell :
I thought o' the Rebellion, then o'
Hell,

Which some folks tell ye now is jest a
metterfor

(A the'ry, p'raps, it wun't *feel* none the
better for) :

I thought o' Reconstruction, wut we'd
win

Patchin' our patent self-blow-up agin :
I thought ef this 'ere milkin' o' the
wits,

So much a month, warn't givin' Natur'
fits, —

Ef folks warn't druv, findin' their own
milk fail,

To work the cow thet hez an iron tail,
An' ef idees 'thout ripenin' in the pan
Would send up cream to humor ary
man :

From this to thet I let my worryin'
creep,

Till finally I must ha' fell asleep.

Our lives in sleep are some like streams
thet glide

'Twixt flesh an' sperrit boundin' on each
side,

Where both shores' shadders kind o'
mix an' mingle

In sunthin' thet ain't jes' like either
single ;

An' when you cast off moorin's from
To-day,

An' down towards To-morrer drift
away,

The imiges thet tengle on the stream
Make a new upside-down'ard world o'
dream :

Sometimes they seem like sunrise-
streaks an' warnin's

O' wut 'll be in Heaven on Sabbath-
mornin's,

An', mixed right in ez ef jest out o
spite,
Sunthin' thet says your supper ain't
gone right.

I'm gret on dreams, an' often when I
wake,

I've lived so much it makes my mem'ry
ache,

An' can't skurce take a cat-nap in my
cheer

'Thout hevin' 'em, some good, some
bad, all queer.

Now I wuz settin' where I'd ben, it
seemed,

An' ain't sure yit whether I r'ally
dreamed,

Nor, ef I did, how long I might ha'
slep',

When I hearn some un stompin' up the
step,

An' lookin' round, ef two an' two make
four,

I see a Pilgrim Father in the door.
He wore a steeple-hat, tall boots, an'
spurs

With rowels to 'em big ez ches'nut-
burrs,

An' his gret sword behind him sloped
away

Long 'z a man's speech thet dunno wut
to say. —

“Ef your name's Biglow, an' your
given-name

Hosee,” sez he, “it's arter you I came ;
I'm your gret-gran'ther multiplied by
three.” —

“My wut ?” sez I. — “Your gret-gret-
gret,” sez he :

“You would n't ha' never ben here but
for me.

Two hundred an' three year ago this
May

The ship I come in sailed up Boston
Bay ;

I'd been a cunnle in our Civil War, —
But wut on airth hev *you* gut up one
for ?

Coz we du things in England, 'tain't for
you

To git a notion you can du 'em tu :
I'm told you write in public prints : ef
true,

't's nateral you should know a thing
or two." —

"Thet air's an argymunt I can't end-
orse, —

'T would prove, coz you wear spurs,
you kep' a horse :

For brains," sez I, "wutever you may
think,

Ain't boun' to cash the draf's o' pen-an'-
ink, —

Though mos' folks write ez ef they
hoped jes' quickenin'

The churn would argoo skim-milk into
thickenin' ;

But skim-milk ain't a thing to change
its view

O' wut it's meant for more 'n a smoky
flue.

But du pray tell me, 'fore we furd-
er go,

How in all Natur' did you come to
know

'Bout our affairs," sez I, "in Kingdom-
Come?" —

"Wal, I worked round at sperrit-rap-
pin' some,

An' danced the tables till their legs
wuz gone,

In hopes o' larnin' wut wuz goin' on,"
Sez he, "but mejums lie so like all-
split

'Thet I concluded it wuz best to quit.
But, come now, ef you wun't confess
to knowin',

You 've some conjectures how the
thing's a-goin'." —

"Gran'ther," sez I, "a vane warn't
never known

Nor asked to hev a jedgment of its
own ;

An' yit, ef 't ain't gut rusty in the jints,
It's safe to trust its say on certin pints :

It knows the wind's opinions to a T,
An' the wind settles wut the weather 'll
be."

"I never thought a scion of our stock
Could grow the wood to make a
weathercock ;

When I wuz younger 'n you, skurce
more 'n a shaver,

No airthly wind," sez he, "could make
me waver !"

(Ez he said this, he clinched his jaw an'
forehead,

Hitchin' his belt to bring his sword-
hilt farrard.) —

"Jes' so it wuz with me," sez I, "I
swow,

When I wuz younger 'n wut you see
me now, —

Nothin' from Adam's fall to Huldy's
bonnet,

Thet I warn't full-cocked with my jedg-
ment on it ;

But now I 'm gittin' on in life, I find
It's a sight harder to make up my
mind, —

Nor I don't often try tu, when events
Will du it for me free of all expense.

The moral question 's ollus plain
enough, —

It's jes' the human-natur' side thet 's
tough ;

Wut 's best to think may n't puzzle me
nor you, —

The pinch comes in decidin' wut to
du ;

Ef you read History, all runs smooth
ez grease,

Coz there the men ain't nothin' more 'n
idees, —

But come to *make* it, ez we must to-
day,

Th' idees hev arms an' legs an' stop
rue way ;

It's easy fixin' things in facts an' fig-
gers. —

They can't resist, nor warn't brought
up with niggers ;

But come to try your the'ry on, — why,
then

Your facts an' figgers change to ign'ant
men

Actin' ez ugly —" — "Smite 'em hip
an' thigh !"

Sez gran'ther, "and let every man-
child die !

Oh for three weeks o' Crommle an' the
Lord !

Up, Isr'el, to your tents an' grind the
sword !" —

"Thet kind o' thing worked wal in ole
Judee,

But you forgit how long it's ben A. D. :
You think thet 's ellerkence, — I call it
shoddy,

A thing," sez I, "wun't cover soul nor
body ;

I like the plain all-wool o' common-
sense,
Thet warms ye now, an' will a twelve-
month hence.
You took to follerin' where the Proph-
ets beckoned,
An', fust you knowed on, back come
Charles the Second ;
Now wut I want 's to hev all *we* gain
stick,
An' not to start Millennium too quick ;
We hain't to punish only, but to keep,
An' the cure 's gut to go a cent'ry
deep."
"Wal, milk-an'-water ain't the best o'
glue,"
Sez he, "an' so you'll find before you
're thru ;
Ef reshness venters sunthin', shilly-
shally
Loses ez often wut 's ten times the
vally.
Thet exe of ourn, when Charles's neck
gut split,
Opened a gap thet ain't bridged over
yit :
Slav'ry 's your Charles, the Lord hez
gin the exe — " —
"Our Charles," sez I, "hez gut eight
million necks.
The hardest question ain't the black
man's right,
The trouble is to 'mancipate the white ;
One 's chained in body an' can be sot
free,
But t'other 's chained in soul to an
idee :
It 's a long job, but we shall worry thru
it ;
Ef bagnets fail, the spellin'-book must
du it."
"Hosee," sez he, "I think you 're
goin' to fail :
The rattlesnake ain't dangerous in the
tail ;
This 'ere rebellion 's nothin' but the
rattle, —
You 'll stomp on thet an' think you 've
won the bettle ;
It 's Slavery thet 's the fangs an' think-
in' head,
An' ef you want selvation, cresh it
dead, —
An' cresh it suddin, or you 'll larn by
waitin'

Thet Chance wun't stop to listen to
debatin' ! —
"God's truth !" sez I, — "an' ef *I*
held the club,
An' knowed jes' where to strike, —
but there 's the rub !" —
"Strike soon," sez he, "or you 'll be
deadly ailin', —
Folks thet 's afear'd to fail are sure o'
failin' ;
God hates your sneakin' creturs thet
believe
He 'll settle things they run away an'
leave !"
He brought his foot down fercely, ez
he spoke.
An' give me sech a startle thet I woke.

No. VII.

LATEST VIEWS OF MR. BIG-
LOW.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

[IT is with feelings of the liveliest
pain that we inform our readers of the
death of the Reverend Homer Wilbur,
A. M., which took place suddenly, by
an apoplectic stroke, on the afternoon
of Christmas day, 1862. Our vena-
ble friend (for so we may venture to
call him, though we never enjoyed the
high privilege of his personal acquaint-
ance) was in his eighty-fourth year,
having been born June 12, 1779, at
Pigsgusset Precinct (now West Jeru-
sha) in the then District of Maine.
Graduated with distinction at Hubville
College in 1805, he pursued his theo-
logical studies with the late Reverend
Preserved Thacker, D. D., and was
called to the charge of the First So-
ciety in Jaalam in 1809, where he re-
mained till his death.

"As an antiquary he has probably
left no superior, if, indeed, an equal,"
writes his friend and colleague, the
Reverend Jeduthun Hitchcock, to
whom we are indebted for the above
facts ; "in proof of which I need only
allude to his 'History of Jaalam,
Genealogical, Topographical, and Ec-

clesiastical,' 1849, which has won him an eminent and enduring place in our more solid and useful literature. It is only to be regretted that his intense application to historical studies should have so entirely withdrawn him from the pursuit of poetical composition, for which he was endowed by Nature with a remarkable aptitude. His well-known hymn, beginning, 'With clouds of care encompassed round,' has been attributed in some collections to the late President Dwight, and it is hardly presumptuous to affirm that the simile of the rainbow in the eighth stanza would do no discredit to that polished pen."

We regret that we have not room at present for the whole of Mr. Hitchcock's exceedingly valuable communication. We hope to lay more liberal extracts from it before our readers at an early day. A summary of its contents will give some notion of its importance and interest. It contains: 1st, A biographical sketch of Mr. Wilbur, with notices of his predecessors in the pastoral office, and of eminent clerical contemporaries; 2d, An obituary of deceased, from the Punkin-Falls "Weekly Parallel"; 3d, A list of his printed and manuscript productions and of projected works; 4th, Personal anecdotes and recollections, with specimens of table-talk; 5th, A tribute to his relict, Mrs. Dorcas (Pilcox) Wilbur; 6th, A list of graduates fitted for different colleges by Mr. Wilbur, with biographical memoranda touching the more distinguished; 7th, Concerning learned, charitable, and other societies, of which Mr. Wilbur was a member, and of those with which, had his life been prolonged, he would doubtless have been associated, with a complete catalogue of such Americans as have been Fellows of the Royal Society; 8th, A brief summary of Mr. Wilbur's latest conclusions concerning the 'Tenth Horn of the Beast in its special application to recent events for which the public, as Mr. Hitchcock assures us, have been waiting with feelings of lively anticipation; 9th, Mr. Hitchcock's own views on the same topic; and,

10th, A brief essay on the importance of local histories. It will be apparent that the duty of preparing Mr. Wilbur's biography could not have fallen into more sympathetic hands.

In a private letter with which the reverend gentleman has since favored us, he expresses the opinion that Mr. Wilbur's life was shortened by our unhappy civil war. It disturbed his studies, dislocated all his habitual associations and trains of thought, and unsettled the foundations of a faith, rather the result of habit than conviction, in the capacity of man for self-government. "Such has been the felicity of my life," he said to Mr. Hitchcock, on the very morning of the day he died, "that, through the divine mercy, I could always say, *Summum nec metuo diem, nec opto*. It has been my habit, as you know, on every recurrence of this blessed anniversary, to read Milton's 'Hymn of the Nativity' till its sublime harmonies so dilated my soul and quickened its spiritual sense that I seemed to hear that other song which gave assurance to the shepherds that there was One who would lead them also in green pastures and beside the still waters. But to-day I have been unable to think of anything but that mournful text, 'I came not to send peace, but a sword,' and, did it not smack of pagan presumptuousness, could almost wish I had never lived to see this day."

Mr. Hitchcock also informs us that his friend "lies buried in the Jaalam graveyard, under a large red-cedar which he specially admired. A neat and substantial monument is to be erected over his remains, with a Latin epitaph written by himself; for he was accustomed to say, pleasantly, 'that there was at least one occasion in a scholar's life when he might show the advantages of a classical training.'"

The following fragment of a letter addressed to us, and apparently intended to accompany Mr. Biglow's contribution to the present number, was found upon his table after his decease. — EDITORS ATLANTIC MONTHLY.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

JAALAM, 24th Dec., 1862.

RESPECTED SIRS, — The infirm state of my bodily health would be a sufficient apology for not taking up the pen at this time, wholesome as I deem it for the mind to apricate in the shelter of epistolary confidence, were it not that a considerable, I might even say a large, number of individuals in this parish expect from their pastor some publick expression of sentiment at this crisis. Moreover, *Qui tacitus ardet magis uritur*. In trying times like these, the besetting sin of undisciplined minds is to seek refuge from inexplicable realities in the dangerous stimulant of angry partisanship or the indolent narcotick of vague and hopeful vaticination: *fortunamque suo temperat arbitrio*. Both by reason of my age and my natural temperament, I am unfitted for either. Unable to penetrate the inscrutable judgments of God, I am more than ever thankful that my life has been prolonged till I could in some small measure comprehend His mercy. As there is no man who does not at some time render himself amenable to the one, — *quum vix justus sit securus*, — so there is none that does not feel himself in daily need of the other.

I confess, I cannot feel, as some do, a personal consolation for the manifest evils of this war in any remote or contingent advantages that may spring from it. I am old and weak, I can bear little, and can scarce hope to see better days; nor is it any adequate compensation to know that Nature is old and strong and can bear much. Old men philosophize over the past, but the present is only a burthen and a weariness. The one lies before them like a placid evening landscape; the other is full of the vexations and anxieties of housekeeping. It may be true enough that *miscet hæc illis, prohibetque Clotho fortunam stare*, but he who said it was fain at last to call in Atropos with her shears before her time: and I cannot help selfishly mourning that the

fortune of our Republick could not at least stand till my days were numbered.

Libullus would find the origin of wars in the great exaggeration of riches, and does not stick to say that in the days of the beechen trencher there was peace. But averse as I am by nature from all wars, the more as they have been especially fatal to libraries, I would have this one go on till we are reduced to wooden platters again, rather than surrender the principle to deend which it was undertaken. Though I believe Slavery to have been the cause of it, by so thoroughly demoralizing Northern politicks for its own purposes as to give opportunity and hope to treason, yet I would not have our thought and purpose diverted from their true object, — the maintenance of the idea of Government. We are not merely suppressing an enormous riot, but contending for the possibility of permanent order coexisting with democratical fickleness; and while I would not superstitiously venerate form to the sacrifice of substance, neither would I forget that an adherence to precedent and prescription can alone give that continuity and coherence under a democratical constitution which are inherent in the person of a despotick monarch and the selfishness of an aristocratical class. *Stet pro ratione voluntas* is as dangerous in a majority as in a tyrant.

I cannot allow the present production of my young friend to go out without a protest from me against a certain extremeness in his views, more pardonable in the poet than the philosopher. While I agree with him, that the only cure for rebellion is suppression by force, yet I must animadvert upon certain phrases where I seem to see a coincidence with a popular fallacy on the subject of compromise. On the one hand there are those who do not see that the vital principle of Government and the seminal principle of Law cannot properly be made a subject of compromise at all, and on the other those who are equally blind to the truth that without a compromise of individual

opinions, interests, and even rights, no society would be possible. *In medio tutissimus.* For my own part, I would gladly —

—

Ef I a song or two could n make
Like rockets druv by their own burn-
in',

All leap an' light, to leave a wake
Men's hearts an' faces skyward turn-
in'! —

But, it strikes me, 't ain't jest the time
Fer stringin' words with settistaction :
Wut 's wanted now 's the silent rhyme
'T'wixt upright Will an' downright
Action.

Words, ef you keep 'em, pay their keep,
But gabble 's the short cut to ruin ;
It 's gratis, (gals half-price,) but cheap
At no rate, ef it henders doin' ;
Ther' 's nothin' wuss, 'less 't is to set
A martyr-prem'um upon jawrin' :
Teapots git dangerous, ef you shet
Their lids down on 'em with Fort
Warren.

'Bout long enough it 's ben discussed
Who sot the magazine afire,
An' whether, ef Bob Wickliffe bust,
'T would scare us more or blow us
higher.

D' ye 's pose the Gret Foreseer's plan
Wuz settled fer him in town-meetin' ?
Or thet ther' 'd ben no Fall o' Man,
Ef Adam 'd on'y bit a sweetin' ?

Oh, Jon'than, ef you want to be
A rugged chap agin an' hearty,
Go fer wutever 'll hurt Jeff D.,
Nut wut 'll boost up ary party.
Here 's hell broke loose, an' we lay flat
With half the univarse a-singin',
Till Sen'tor This an' Gov'nor Thet
Stop squabblin' fer the garding-ingin.

It 's war we 're in, not politics ;
It 's systems wrastlin' now, not
parties ;
An' victory in the eend 'll fix
Where longest will an' truest heart is.

An' wut 's the Guv'ment folks about ?
'Tryin' to hope ther' 's nothin' doin',
An' look ez though they did n't doubt
Sunthin' pertickier wuz a brewin'.

Ther' 's critters yit thet talk an' act
Fer wut they call Concination ;
They d hand a buff'io-drove a tract
When they wuz madder than all
Bashan.

Conciliate ? it jest means *be kicked*,
No metter how they phrase an' tone
it ;

It means thet we 're to set down licked,
'Thet we 're poor shotes an' glad to
own it !

A war on tick 's ez dear 'z the deuce,
But it wun't leave no lastin' traces,
Ez 't would to make a sneakin' trace
Without no moral specie-basis :
Ef green-backs ain't nut jest the cheese,
I guess ther' 's evils thet 's ex-
tremer, —

Fer instance, — shinplaster idees
Like them put out by Gov'nor Sey-
mour.

Last year, the Nation, at a word,
When tremblin' Freedom cried to
shield her,

Flamed weldin' into one keen sword
Waitin' an' longin' fer a wielder :
A splendid flash ! — but how 'd the
grasp

With sech a chance ez thet wuz tally ?
Ther' warn't no meanin' in our clasp, —
Half this, half thet, all shilly-shally.

More men ? More Man ! It 's there
we fail ;

Weak plans grow weaker yit by
lengthenin' :

Wut use in addin' to the tail,
When it 's the head 's in need o'
strengthenin' ?

We wanted one thet felt all Chief
From roots o' hair to sole o' stockin',
Square-sot with thousan'-ton belief
In him an' us, ef earth went rockin' !

Ole Hick'ry would n't ha' stood see-
saw

'Bout doin' things till they wuz done
with, —

He'd smashed the tables o' the Law
 In time o' need to load his gun with;
 He could n't see but jest one side, —
 Ef his, 't wuz God's, an' thet wuz
 plenty;
 An' so his "*Forrards!*" multiplied
 An army's fightin' weight by twenty.

But this 'ere histin', creak, creak, creak,
 Your cappen's heart up with a der-
 rick,
 This tryin' to coax a lightnin'-streak
 Out of a half-discouraged hay-rick,
 This hangin' on mont' arter mont'
 Fer one sharp purpose 'mongst the
 twitter, —
 I tell ye, it doos kind o' stunt
 The peth and sperit of a critter

In six months where'll the People be,
 Ef leaders look on revolution
 Ez though it wuz a cup o' tea, —
 Jest social el'ments in solution?
 This weighin' things doos wal enough
 When war cools down, an' comes to
 writin';
 But while it's makin', the true stuff
 Is pison-mad, pig-headed fightin'.

Democ'acy gives every man
 A right to be his own oppressor;
 But a loose Gov'ment ain't the plan,
 Helpless ez spilled beans on a dres-
 ser:
 I tell ye one thing we might larn
 From them smart critters, the Seced-
 ers, —
 Ef bein' right's the fust consarn,
 The 'fore the-fust's cast-iron leaders.

But 'pears to me I see some signs
 Thet we're a-goin' to use our senses:
 Jeff druv us into these hard lines,
 An' ough' to bear his half th' ex-
 penses;
 Slaverv's Secession's heart an' will,
 South, North, East, West, where'er
 you find it,
 An' ef it drors into War's mill.
 D' ye say them thunder-stones sha'
 n't grind it?

D' ye s'pose, ef Jeff giv *him* a lick,
 Ole Hick'ry'd tried his head to sof'n

So 's 't would n't hurt th' "a-ty stick"
 'Thet 's made our side see stars so
 of'n?
 "No!" he'd ha' thundered, "on your
 knees,
 An' own one flag, one road to glory!
 Soft-heartedness, in times like these,
 Shows sof'ness in the upper story!"

An' why should we kick up a muss
 About the Pres'dunt's proclamation?
 It ain't a-goin' to lib'rate us,
 Ef we don't like emancipation:
 The right to be a cussed fool
 Is safe from all devices human,
 It 's common (ez a gin'l rule)
 To every critter born o' woman.

So *we* 're all right, an' I, fer one,
 Don't think our cause 'll lose in vally
 By rammin' Scriptur' in our gun,
 An' gittin' Natur' fer an ally:
 Thank God, say I, fer even a plan
 To lift one human bein's level,
 Give one more chance to make a man,
 Or, anyhow, to spile a devil!

Not thet I 'm one thet much expec'
 Millennium by express to-morrer;
 They *will* miscarry, — I rec'lec'
 Tu many on 'em, to my sorrer:
 Men ain't made angels in a day,
 No matter how you mould an' labor
 'em, —
 Nor 'riginal ones, I guess, don't stay
 With Abe so of'n ez with Abraham.

The'ry thinks Fact a pooty thing,
 An' wants the banns read right en-
 suin';
 But fact wun't noways wear the ring
 'Thout years o' settin' up an' woin':
 Though, arter all, Time's dial-plate
 Marks cent'ries with the minute-
 finger,
 An' Good can't never come tu late,
 Though it doos seem to try an' linger.

An' come wut will, I think it's grand
 Abe's gut his will et last bloom-fur-
 naced
 In trial-flames till it 'll stand
 The strain o' bein' in deadly earnest:

Thet 's wut we want, — we want to
know

The folks on our side hez the bravery
To b'lieve ez hard, come weal, come
woe,

In Freedom ez Jeff doos in Slavery.

Set the two forces foot to foot,
An' every man knows who 'll be win-
ner,

Whose faith in God hez ary root
Thet goes down deeper than his din-
ner:

Then 't will be felt from pole to pole,
Without no need o' proclamation,
Earth's Biggest Country 's gut her soul
An' risen up Earth's Greatest Na-
tion!

No. VIII.

KETELOPOTOMACHIA.

PRELIMINARY NOTE.

IN the month of February, 1866, the editors of the "Atlantic Monthly" received from the Rev. Mr. Hitchcock of Jaalam a letter enclosing the macaronic verses which follow, and promising to send more, if more should be communicated. "They were rapped out on the evening of Thursday last past," he says, "by what claimed to be the spirit of my late predecessor in the ministry here, the Rev. Dr. Wilbur, through the medium of a young man at present domiciled in my family. As to the possibility of such spiritual manifestations, or whether they be properly so entitled, I express no opinion, as there is a division of sentiment on that subject in the parish, and many persons of the highest respectability in social standing entertain opposing views. The young man who was improved as a medium submitted himself to the experiment with manifest reluctance, and is still unprepared to believe in the authenticity of the manifestations. During his residence with me his de-

portment has always been exemplary; he has been constant in his attendance upon our family devotions and the public ministrations of the Word, and has more than once privately stated to me, that the latter had often brought him under deep concern of mind. The table is an ordinary quadrupedal one, weighing about thirty pounds, three feet seven inches and a half in height, four feet square on the top, and of beech or maple, I am not definitely prepared to say which. It had once belonged to my respected predecessor, and had been, so far as I can learn upon careful inquiry, of perfectly regular and correct habits up to the evening in question. On that occasion the young man previously alluded to had been sitting with his hands resting carelessly upon it, while I read over to him: at his request certain portions of my last Sabbath's discourse. On a sudden the rappings, as they are called, commenced to render themselves audible, at first faintly, but in process of time more distinctly and with violent agitation of the table. The young man expressed himself both surprised and pained by the wholly unexpected, and, so far as he was concerned, unprecedented occurrence. At the earnest solicitation, however, of several who happened to be present, he consented to go on with the experiment, and with the assistance of the alphabet commonly employed in similar emergencies, the following communication was obtained and written down immediately by myself. Whether any, and if so, how much weight should be attached to it, I venture no decision. That Dr. Wilbur had sometimes employed his leisure in Latin versification I have ascertained to be the case, though all that has been discovered of that nature among his papers consists of some fragmentary passages of a version into hexameters of portions of the Song of Solomon. These I had communicated about a week or ten days previous [ly] to the young gentleman who officiated as medium in the communication afterwards received. I have thus, I believe, stated all the material facts that have

any elucidative bearing upon this mysterious occurrence."

So far Mr. Hitchcock, who seems perfectly master of Webster's unabridged quarto, and whose flowing style leads him into certain further expatiations for which we have not room. We have since learned that the young man he speaks of was a sophomore, put under his care during a sentence of rustication from — College, where he had distinguished himself rather by physical experiments on the comparative power of resistance in window-glass to various solid substances, than in the more regular studies of the place. In answer to a letter of inquiry, the professor of Latin says, "There was no harm in the boy that I know of beyond his loving mischief more than Latin, nor can I think of any spirits likely to possess him except those commonly called animal. He was certainly not remarkable for his Latinity, but I see nothing in verses you enclose that would lead me to think them beyond his capacity, or the result of any special inspiration whether of beech or maple. Had that of *birch* been tried upon him earlier and more faithfully, the verses would perhaps have been better in quality and certainly in quantity." This exact and thorough scholar then goes on to point out many false quantities and barbarisms. It is but fair to say, however, that the author, whoever he was, seems not to have been unaware of some of them himself, as is shown by a great many notes appended to the verses as we received them, and purporting to be by Scaliger, Bentley and others, — among them the *Esprit de Voltaire*! These we have omitted as clearly meant to be humorous and altogether failing therein.

Though entirely satisfied that the verses are altogether unworthy of Mr. Wilbur, who seems to have been a tolerable Latin scholar after the fashion of his day, yet we have determined to print them here partly as belonging to the *res gestæ* of this collection, and partly as a warning to their putative author which may keep him from such indecorous pranks for the future.

KETTELOPOTOMACHIA.

P. Ovidii Nasonis carmen heroicum macaronicum perplexanetrum, inter Getas getico more compositum, denuo per medium ardentispiritualementem, adjuvante mensâ diabolicè obsessâ, recuperatum, curâque Jo. Conradi Schwarzii umbræ, aliis necnon plurimis adjuvantibus, restitutum.

LIBER I.

PUNCTORUM garretos colens et cellara
 Quinque,
 Gutteribus quæ et gaudes sundayam
 abstingere frontem,
 Plerumque insidos solita fluitare liquore
 Tanglepedem quem homines appellant
 Di quoque rotgut,
 Pimplidis, rubicundaque, Musa, O,
 bourbonolensque,
 Fenianas rixas procul, alma, brogipotentis
 Patricii cyathos iterantis et horrida
 bella,
 Backos dum virides viridis Brigitta
 remittit,
 Linqvens, eximios celebrem, da, Virginienses
 Rowdes, præcipue et TE, heros alte,
 Polarde!
 Insignes juvenesque, illo certamine
 lictos,
 Colemane, Tylere, nec vos oblivione
 relinquam.

Ampla aquilæ invictæ fausto est sub
 tegmine terra,
 Backyfer, ooiskeo pollens, ebenoque
 bipede,
 Socors præsidum et altrix (denique
 quidruminantium),
 Duplefeveorum uberrima; illis et integre
 cordi est
 Deplere assidue et sine proprio incommodo
 fiscum;
 Nunc etiam placidum hoc opus invictique
 secuti,
 Goosam aureos ni eggos voluissent immo
 necare
 Quæ peperit, saltem ac de illis meliora
 merentem.
 Condidit hanc Smithius Dux, Cap-
 tinus inclutus ille
 Regis Ulyssæ instar, docti arcum in-
 tendere longum;

Condidit ille Johansmith, Virginiamque
 vocavit,
 Settledit autem Jacobus rex, nomine
 primus,
 Rascalis implens ruptis, blagardisque
 deboshtis, 25
 Militibusque ex Falstaffi legione fugatis
 Wenchisque illi quas poterant seducere
 nuptas :
 Virgineum, ah, littus matronis talibus
 impar !
 Progeniem stirpe ex hoc non sine stig-
 mate ducunt
 Multi sese qui jactant regum esse ne-
 potes : 30
 Haud omnes, Mater, genitos quæ nu-
 per habebas
 Bello fortes, consilio cautos, virtute
 decoros,
 Jamque et habes, sparso si patrio in
 sanguine virtus,
 Mostrabisque iterum, antiquis sub as-
 tris reducta !
 De illis qui upkikitant, dicebam, rum-
 pora tanta, 35
 Letcheris et Floydis magnisque Extra
 ordine Billis ;
 Est his prisca fides jurare et breakere
 wordum ;
 Poppere fellerum a tergo, aut stickere
 clam bowknifo,
 Haud sane facinus, dignum sed victrice
 lauro ;
 Larrupere et nigerum, factum præstan-
 tius ullo : 40
 Ast chlamydem piciplumatam, Icariam,
 flito et ineptam,
 Yanko gratis induere, illum et valido
 railo
 Insuper acri equitare docere est hos-
 pitio uti.
 Nescio an ille Polardus duplesveori-
 bus ortus,
 Sed reputo potius de radice poorwite-
 manorum : 45
 Fortuiti proles, ni fallor, Tylerus erat
 Præsidis, omnibus ab Whiggis nomi-
 natus a poor cuss ;
 Et nobilem tertium evincit venerabile
 nomen.
 Ast animosi omnes bellique ad tympana
 ha ! ha !
 Vociferant læti, procul et si proelia,
 sive 50

Hostem incautum atsito possunt shoot-
 ere salvi :
 Imperiique capaces, esset si stylus
 agmen,
 Pro dulci spoliabant et sine dangere
 fito.
 Præ ceterisque Polardus : si Secessia
 licta,
 Se nunquam licturum jurat, res et un-
 heardof, 55
 Verbo hæsit, similisque audaci roosteri
 invicto,
 Dunghilli solitus rex pullos whoppere
 molles,
 Grantuni, hireingos stripes quique et
 splendida tollunt
 Sidera, et Yankos, territum et omnem
 sarsuit orbem.
 Usque dabant operam isti omnes,
 noctesque diesque, 60
 Samuelem demulgere avunculum, id
 vero siccum ;
 Uberibus sed ejus, et horum est culpa,
 remotis,
 Parvam domi vaccam, nec mora mini-
 ma, quærunt,
 Lacticarentem autem et droppam vix
 in die dantem ;
 Reddite avunculi, et exclamabant, red-
 dite pappam ! 65
 Polko ut consule, gemens, Billy im-
 murmurat Extra ;
 Echo respondit, thesauro ex vacuo,
 pappam !
 Frustra explorant pocketa, ruber nare
 repertum ;
 Officia expulsi aspiciunt rapta, et Para-
 disum
 Occlusum, viridesque haud illis nascere
 backos ; 70
 Stupent tunc oculis madidis spittantque
 silenter.
 Adhibere usu ast longo vires prorsus
 inepti,
 Si non ut qui grindeat axve trabemve
 revolvat,
 Virginiam excruciant totis nunc might-
 ibu' matrem :
 Non melius, puta, nono panis dimid-
 iumne est ? 75
 Readere ibi non posse est casus com-
 moner ullo ;
 Tanto intentius imprimere est opus ergo
 statuta :

Nemo propterea pejor, melior, sine
doubto,
Obtineat qui contractum, si et postea
rhino ;
Ergo Polardus, si quis, inxsuperabilis
heros, ⁸⁰
Colemanus impavidus nondum, atque
in purpure natus
Tylerus Iohanides celerisque in flito
Nathaniel,
Quisque optans digitos in tantum stick-
ere pium,
Adstant accincti imprimere aut perrum-
pere leges :
Quales os miserum rabidi tres ægre
molossi, ⁸⁵
Quales aut dubium textum atra in veste
ministri,
Tales circumstabant nunc nostri inopes
hoc job.
Hisque Polardus voce canoro talia
fatus :
Primum autem, veluti est mos, præceps
quisque liquorat,
Quisque et Nicotianum ingens quid
inserit atrum, ⁹⁰
Heroûm nitidum decus et solamen avi-
tum,
Masticat ac simul altisonans, spittatque
profuse :
Quis de Virginia meruit præstantius
unquam ?
Quis se pro patria curavit impigre tu-
tum ?
Speechisque articulisque hominum quis
fortior ullus, ⁹⁵
Ingeminans pennæ lickos et vulnera
vocis ?
Quisnam putidius (hic) sarsuit Yanki-
nimos,
Sæpius aut dedit ultro datam et broke
his parolam ?
Mente inquassatus solidaque, tyranno
minante,
Horrisonis (hic) bombis mœnia et alta
quatente, ¹⁰⁰
Sese promptum (hic) jactans Yankos
lickere centum,
Atque ad lastum invictus non surrendi-
dit unquam ?
Ergo haud meddlite, posco, mique re-
linquite (hic) hoc job,
Si non — knifumque enormem mos-
trat spittatque tremendus.

Dixerat : ast alii reliquorant et sin-
pauso ¹⁰⁵
Pluggos incumbunt maxillis, uterque
vicissim
Certamine innocuo valde madidam
inquinat assem :
Tylerus autem, dumque liquorat aridus
hostis,
Mirum aspicit duplumque bibentem,
astante Lyæo ;
Ardens impavidusque edidit tamen im-
pia verba ; ¹¹⁰
Duplum quamvis te aspicio, esses atque
viginti,
Mendacem dicerem totumque (hic)
thrasherem acervum ;
Nempe et thrasham, doggonatus (hic)
sim nisi faxem ;
Lambastabo omnes catawompositer-
(hic) que chawam !
Dixit et impulsus Ryeo ruitur bene ti-
tus, ¹¹⁵
Illi nam gravidum caput et laterem
habet in hatto.
Hunc inhiat titubansque Polardus,
optat et illum
Stickere inermem, protegit autem rite
Lyæus,
Et pronos geminos, oculis dubitantibus,
heros
Cernit et irritus hostes, dumque excogi-
tat utrum ¹²⁰
Primum inpitchere, corrui, inter utros-
que recumbit,
Magno asino similis nimio sub pondere
quassus :
Colemanus hos mœstus, triste ruminans-
que solamen,
Inspicit hiccans, circumspittat terque
cubantes ;
Funereisque his ritibus humidis inde
solutis, ¹²⁵
Sternitur, invalidusque illis superincidit
infans ;
Hos sepelit somnus et snorunt corniso-
nantes,
Watchmanus inscios ast calybooso
deinde reponit.

 No. IX.

[THE Editors of the "Atlantic" have received so many letters of inquiry con-

cerning the literary remains of the late Mr. Wilbur, mentioned by his colleague and successor, Rev. Jeduthan Hitchcock, in a communication from which we made some extracts in our number for February, 1863, and have been so repeatedly urged to print some part of them for the gratification of the public, that they felt it their duty at least to make some effort to satisfy so urgent a demand. They have accordingly carefully examined the papers intrusted to them, but find most of the productions of Mr. Wilbur's pen so fragmentary, and even chaotic, written as they are on the backs of letters in an exceedingly cramped chirography, — here a memorandum for a sermon; there an observation of the weather; now the measurement of an extraordinary head of cabbage, and then of the cerebral capacity of some reverend brother deceased; a calm inquiry into the state of modern literature, ending in a method of detecting if milk be impoverished with water, and the amount thereof; one leaf beginning with a genealogy, to be interrupted half-way down with an entry that the brindle cow had calved, — that any attempts at selection seemed desperate. His only complete work, "An Enquiry concerning the Tenth Horn of the Beast," even in the abstract of it given by Mr. Hitchcock, would, by a rough computation of the printers, fill five entire numbers of our journal, and as he attempts, by a new application of decimal fractions, to identify it with the Emperor Julian, seems hardly of immediate concern to the general reader. Even the Table-Talk, though doubtless originally highly interesting in the domestic circle, is so largely made up of theological discussion and matters of local or preterite interest, that we have found it hard to extract anything that would at all satisfy expectation. But, in order to silence further inquiry, we subjoin a few passages as illustrations of its general character.]

I think I could go near to be a perfect Christian if I were always a visitor,

as I have sometimes been, at the house of some hospitable friend. I can show a great deal of self-denial where the best of everything is urged upon me with kindly importunity. It is not so very hard to turn the other cheek for a kiss. And when I meditate upon the pains taken for our entertainment in this life, on the endless variety of seasons, of human character and fortune, on the costliness of the hangings and furniture of our dwelling here, I sometimes feel a singular joy in looking upon myself as God's guest, and cannot but believe that we should all be wiser and happier, because more grateful, if we were always mindful of our privilege in this regard. And should we not rate more cheaply any honor that men could pay us, if we remembered that every day we sat at the table of the Great King? Yet must we not forget that we are in strictest bonds His servants also; for there is no impiety so abject as that which expects to be *dead-headed* (*ut ita dicam*) through life, and which, calling itself trust in Providence, is in reality asking Providence to trust us and taking up all our goods on false pretences. It is a wise rule to take the world as we find it, not always to leave it so.

It has often set me thinking when I find that I can always pick up plenty of empty nuts under my shagbark-tree. The squirrels know them by their lightness, and I have seldom seen one with the marks of their teeth in it. What a school-house is the world, if our wits would only not play truant! For I observe that men set most store by forms and symbols in proportion as they are mere shells. It is the outside they want and not the kernel. What stores of such do not many, who in material things are as shrewd as the squirrels, lay up for the spiritual winter-supply of themselves and their children! I have seen churches that seemed to me garners of these withered nuts. for it is wonderful how prosaic is the apprehension of symbols by the minds of most men. It is not one sect nor another, but all, who, like the dog of

the fable, have let drop the spiritual substance of symbols for their material shadow. If one attribute miraculous virtues to mere holy water, that beautiful emblem of inward purification at the door of God's house, another cannot comprehend the significance of baptism without being ducked over head and ears in the liquid vehicle thereof.

[Perhaps a word of historical comment may be permitted here. My late revered predecessor was, I would humbly affirm, as free from prejudice as falls to the lot of the most highly favored individuals of our species. To be sure, I have heard him say that, "what were called strong prejudices, were in fact only the repulsion of sensitive organizations from that moral and even physical effluvium through which some natures by providential appointment, like certain unsavory quadrupeds, gave warning of their neighborhood. Better ten mistaken suspicions of this kind than one close encounter." This he said somewhat in heat, on being questioned as to his motives for always refusing his pulpit to those itinerant professors of vicarious benevolence who end their discourses by taking up a collection. But at another time I remember his saying, "that there was one large thing which small minds always found room for, and that was great prejudices." This, however, by the way. The statement which I purposed to make was simply this. Down to A. D. 1830, Jaalam had consisted of a single parish, with one house set apart for religious services. In that year the foundations of a Baptist Society were laid by the labors of Elder Joash Q Balcom, 2d. As the members of the new body were drawn from the First Parish, Mr. Wilbur was for a time considerably exercised in mind. He even went so far as on one occasion to follow the reprehensible practice of the earlier Puritan divines in choosing a punning text, and preached from Hebrews xiii. 9: "Be not carried about with *divers* and strange doctrines." He afterwards, in accordance with one

of his own maxims, — "to get a dead injury out of the mind as soon as is decent, bury it, and then ventilate," — in accordance with this maxim, I say, he lived on very friendly terms with Rev. Shearjashub Scrimgour, present pastor of the Baptist Society in Jaalam. Yet I think it was never displeasing to him that the church edifice of that society (though otherwise a creditable specimen of architecture) remained without a bell, as indeed it does to this day. So much seemed necessary to do away with any appearance of acerbity toward a respectable community of professing Christians, which might be suspected in the conclusion of the above paragraph. — J. H.]

In lighter moods he was not averse from an innocent play upon words. Looking up from his newspaper one morning as I entered his study he said, "When I read a debate in Congress, I feel as if I were sitting at the feet of Zeno in the shadow of the Portico." On my expressing a natural surprise, he added, smiling, "Why, at such times the only view which honorable members give me of what goes on in the world is through their intercalumniations." I smiled at this after a moment's reflection, and he added gravely, "The most punctilious refinement of manners is the only salt that will keep a democracy from stinking; and what are we to expect from the people, if their representatives set them such lessons? Mr. Everett's whole life has been a sermon from this text. There was, at least, this advantage in duelling, that it set a certain limit on the tongue." In this connection, I may be permitted to recall a playful remark of his upon another occasion. The painful divisions in the First Parish, A. D. 1844, occasioned by the wild notions in respect to the rights of (what Mr. Wilbur, so far as concerned the reasoning faculty, always called) the unfairest part of creation, put forth by Miss Parthenia Almira Fitz, are too well known to need more than a passing allusion. It was during these heats, long since hap-

pily allayed, that Mr. Wilbur remarked that "the Church had more trouble in dealing with one *sheresiarch* than with twenty *heresiarchs*," and that the men's *conscia recti*, or certainty of being right, was nothing to the women's.

When I once asked his opinion of a poetical composition on which I had expended no little pains, he read it attentively, and then remarked, "Unless one's thought pack more neatly in verse than in prose, it is wiser to refrain. Commonplace gains nothing by being translated into rhyme, for it is something which no hocus-pocus can transubstantiate with the real presence of living thought. You entitle your piece, 'My Mother's Grave,' and expend four pages of useful paper in detailing your emotions there. But, my dear sir, watering does not improve the quality of ink, even though you should do it with tears. To publish a sorrow to Tom, Dick, and Harry is in some sort to advertise its unreality, for I have observed in my intercourse with the afflicted that the deepest grief instinctively hides its face with its hands and is silent. If your piece were printed, I have no doubt it would be popular, for people like to fancy that they feel much better than the trouble of feeling. I would put all poets on oath whether they have striven to say everything they possibly could think of, or to leave out all they could not help saying. In your own case, my worthy young friend, what you have written is merely a deliberate exercise, the gymnastic of sentiment. For your excellent maternal relative is still alive, and is to take tea with me this evening, D. V. Beware of simulated feeling; it is hypocrisy's first cousin; it is especially dangerous to a preacher; for he who says one day, 'Go to, let me seem to be pathetic,' may be nearer than he thinks to saying, 'Go to, let me seem to be virtuous, or earnest, or under sorrow for sin.' Depend upon it, Sappho loved her verses more sincerely than she did Phaon, and Petrarch his sonnets better than Laura, who was indeed but his poetical

stalking-horse. After you shall have once heard that muffled rattle of the clods on the coffin-lid of an irreparable loss, you will grow acquainted with a pathos that will make all elegies hateful. When I was of your age, I also for a time mistook my desire to write verses for an authentic call of my nature in that direction. But one day as I was going forth for a walk, with my head full of an 'Elegy on the Death of Flirtilla,' and vainly groping after a rhyme for *lily* that should not be *silly* or *chilly*, I saw my eldest boy Homer busy over the rain-water hogshead, in that childish experiment at parthenogenesis, the changing a horse-hair into a water-snake. An immersion of six weeks showed no change in the obstinate filament. Here was a stroke of unintended sarcasm. Had I not been doing in my study precisely what my boy was doing out of doors? Had my thoughts any more chance of coming to life by being submerged in rhyme than his hair by soaking in water? I burned my elegy and took a course of Edwards on the Will. People do not make poetry; it is made out of *them* by a process for which I do not find myself fitted. Nevertheless, the writing of verses is a good rhetorical excitation, as teaching us what to shun most carefully in prose. For prose bewitched is like window-glass with bubbles in it, distorting what it should show with pellucid veracity."

It is unwise to insist on doctrinal points as vital to religion. The Bread of Life is wholesome and sufficing in itself, but gulped down with these kickshaws cooked up by theologians, it is apt to produce an indigestion, nay, even at last an incurable dyspepsia of scepticism.

One of the most inexcusable weaknesses of Americans is in signing their names to what are called credentials. But for my interposition, a person who shall be nameless would have taken from this town a recommendation for an office of trust subscribed by the selectmen and all the voters of both par-

ties, ascribing to him as many good qualities as if it had been his tombstone. The excuse was that it would be well for the town to be rid of him, as it would ere long be obliged to maintain him. I would not refuse my name to modest merit, but I would be as cautious as in signing a bond. [I trust I shall be subjected to no imputation of unbecoming vanity, if I mention the fact that Mr. W. indorsed my own qualifications as teacher of the high-school at Pequash Junction. J. H.] When I see a certificate of character with everybody's name to it, I regard it as a letter of introduction from the Devil. Never give a man your name unless you are willing to trust him with your reputation.

There seem now-a-days to be two sources of literary inspiration, — fulness of mind and emptiness of pocket.

I am often struck, especially in reading Montaigne, with the obviousness and familiarity of a great writer's thoughts, and the freshness they gain because said by him. The truth is, we mix their greatness with all they say and give it our best attention. Johannes Faber sic cogitavit, would be no enticing preface to a book, but an accredited name gives credit like the signature of a note of hand. It is the advantage of fame that it is always privileged to take the world by the button, and a thing is weightier for Shakespeare's uttering it by the whole amount of his personality.

It is singular how impatient men are with overpraise of others, how patient with overpraise of themselves; and yet the one does them no injury, while the other may be their ruin.

People are apt to confound mere alertness of mind with attention. The one is but the flying abroad of all the faculties to the open doors and windows at every passing rumor; the other is the concentration of every one of them in a single focus, as in the alchemist over his alembic at the moment of ex-

pected projection. Attention is the stuff that memory is made of, and memory is accumulated genius.

Do not look for the Millennium as imminent. One generation is apt to get all the wear it can out of the cast clothes of the last, and is always sure to use up every paling of the old fence that will hold a nail in building the new.

You suspect a kind of vanity in my genealogical enthusiasm. Perhaps you are right; but it is a universal foible. Where it does not show itself in a personal and private way, it becomes public and gregarious. We flatter ourselves in the Pilgrim Fathers, and the Virginian offshoot of a transported convict swells with the fauzy of a cavalier ancestry. Pride of birth, I have noticed, takes two forms. One complacently traces himself up to a coronet; another, defiantly, to a lapstone. The sentiment is precisely the same in both cases, only that one is the positive and the other the negative pole of it.

Seeing a goat the other day kneeling in order to graze with less trouble, it seemed to me a type of the common notion of prayer. Most people are ready enough to go down on their knees for material blessings, but how few for those spiritual gifts which alone are an answer to our orisons, if we but knew it!

Some people, now-a-days, seem to have hit upon a new moralization of the moth and the candle. They would lock up the light of Truth, lest poor Psyche should put it out in her effort to draw nigh to it.

No. X.

MR. HOSEA BIGLOW TO THE
EDITOR OF THE ATLANTIC
MONTHLY.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter come to han',
Requestin' me to please be funny;

But I ain't made upon a plan
Thet knows wut's comin', gall or
honey :

Ther' 's times the world doos look so
queer,

Odd fancies come afore I call 'em ;
An' then agin, for half a year,
No preacher 'thout a call 's more
solemn.

You're 'n want o' sunthin' light an'
cute,

Rattlin' an' shrewd an' kin' o' jingle-
ish,

An' wish, pervidin' it 'ould suit,
I'd take an' citify my English.

I *ken* write long-tailed, ef I please, —
But when I 'm jokin', no, I thankee ;

Then, 'fore I know it, my idees
Run helter-skelter into Yankee.

Sence I begun to scribble rhyme,
I tell ye wut, I hain't ben foolin' ;

The parson's books, life, death, an'
time

Hev took some trouble with my
schoolin' ;

Nor th' airth don't git put out with me,
Thet love her 'z though she wuz a
woman ;

Why, th' ain't a bird upon the tree
But half forgives my bein' human.

An' yit I love th' unhighschool'd way
Ol' farmers hed when I wuz younger ;

Their talk wuz meatier, an' 'ould stay,
While book-froth seems to whet your
hunger ;

For puttin' in a downright lick
'Twixt Humbug's eyes, ther' 's few
can metch it,

An' then it helves my thoughts ez slick
Ez stret-grained hickory doos a
hetchet.

But when I can't, I can't, thet 's all,
For Natur' won't put up with gullin' ;

Idees you hev to shove an' haul
Like a druv pig ain't wuth a mullein :

Live thoughts ain't sent for ; thru all
rifts

O' sense they pour an' resh ye on-
wards,

Like rivers when south-lyin' drifts
Feel thet th' old airth 's a-wheelin'
sunwards.

Time wuz, the rhymes come crowdin'
thick

Ez office-seekers arter 'lection,
An' into ary place 'ould stick
Without no bother nor objection ;
But sence the war my thoughts hang
back

Ez though I wanted to enlist 'em,
An' subs'tutes, — *they* don't never lack,
But then they 'll slope afore you 've
mist 'em.

Nothin' don't seem like wut it wuz ;
I can't see wut there is to hender,

An' yit my brains jes' go buzz, buzz,
Like bumblebees agin a winder ;

'Fore these times come, in all airth's
row,

Ther' wuz one quiet place, my head
in,

Where I could hide an' think, — but
now

It 's all one teeter, hopin', dreadin'.

Where 's Peace? I start, some clear-
blown night,

When gaunt stone walls grow numb
an' number,

An', creakin' 'cross the snow-crus'
white,

Walk the col' starlight into summer ;
Up grows the moon, an' swell by swell

Thru the pale pasturs silvers dimmer
Than the last smile thet strives to tell

O' love gone heavenward in its shim-
mer.

I hev ben gladder o' sech things
Than cocks o' spring or bees o' clover,

They filled my heart with livin' springs,
But now they seem to freeze 'em
over ;

Sights innercent ez babes on knee,
Peaceful ez eyes o' pastur'd cattle,

Jes' coz they be so, seem to me
To rile me more with thoughts o'
battie.

In-doors an' out by spells I try ;
Ma'am Natur' keeps her spin-wheel
goin',

But leaves my natur' stiff and dry
 Ez fiel's o' clover arter mowin';
 An' her jes' keepin' on the same,
 Calmer 'n a clock, an' never carin',
 An' findin' nary thing to blame,
 Is wus than ef she took to swearin'.

Snow-flakes come whisperin' on the
 pane
 The charm makes blazin' logs so
 pleasant,
 But I can't hark to wut they 're say'n',
 With Grant or Sherman ollers pres-
 ent;
 The chimbleys shudder in the gale,
 Thet lulls, then suddin takes to flap-
 pin'
 Like a shot hawk, but all 's ez stale
 To me ez so much sperit-rappin'.

Under the yaller-pines I house,
 When sunshine makes 'em all sweet-
 scented,
 An' hear among their furry boughs
 The baskin' west-wind purr con-
 tented,
 While 'way o'erhead, ez sweet an' low
 Ez distant bells thet ring for meetin',
 The wedged wil' geese their bugles blow,
 Further an' further South retreatin'.

Or up the slippery knob I strain
 An' see a hundred hills like islan's
 Lift their blue woods in broken chain
 Out o' the sea o' snowy silence;
 The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on
 airth,
 Slow thru the winter air a-shrinkin'
 Seem kin' o' sad, an' roun' the hearth
 Of empty places set me thinkin'.

Beaver roars hoarse with meltin' snows,
 An' rattles di'mon's from his granite;
 Time wuz, he snatched away my prose,
 An' into psalms or satires ran it;
 But he, nor all the rest thet once
 Started my blood to country-dances,
 Can't set me goin' more 'n a dunce
 Thet hain't no use for dreams an'
 fancies.

Rat-tat-tat-tattle thru the street
 I hear the drummers makin' riot,

An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
 Thet follered once an' now are
 quiet, —
 White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
 Thet never knowed the paths o'
 Satan,
 Whose comin' step ther' 's ears thet
 won't,
 No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.

Why, hain't I held 'em on my knee?
 Did n't I love to see 'em growin',
 Three likely lads ez wal could be,
 Hahnsome an' brave an' not tu
 knowin' ?
 I set an' look into the blaze
 Whose natur', jes' like theirn, keeps
 climbin',
 Ez long 'z it lives, in shinin' ways,
 An' half despise myself for rhymin'.

Wut 's words to them whose faith an'
 truth
 On War's red techstone rang true
 metal,
 Who ventered life an' love an' youth
 For the gret prize o' death in battle?
 To him who, deadly hurt, agen
 Flashed on afore the charge's thun-
 der,

Tippin' with fire the bolt of men
 Thet rived the Rebel line asunder?
 'T ain't right to hev the young go fast,
 All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces,
 Leavin' life's paupers dry ez dust
 To try an' make b'lieve fill their
 places:
 Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,
 Ther' 's gaps our lives can't never
 fay in,
 An' thet world seems so fur from this
 Lef' for us loafers to grow gray in!

My eyes cloud up for rain; my mouth
 Will take to twitchin' roun' the cor-
 ners;
 I pity mothers, tu, down South,
 For all they sot among the scorners:
 I'd sooner take my chance to stan'
 At Judgment where your meanest
 slave is,
 Than at God's bar hol' up a han'
 Ez drippin' red ez yourn, Jeff Davis!

Come, Peace! not like a mourner
bowed

For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,
But proud, to meet a people proud,

With eyes that tell o' triumph tasted!
Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,

An' step that proves ye Victory's
daughter!

Longin' for you, our sperits wilt

Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for
water.

Come, while our country feels the lift

Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,

An' knows that freedom ain't a gut

That taries long in han's o' cowards!

Come, sech ez mothers prayed for,
when

They kissed their cross with lips that
quivered,

An' bring fair wages for brave men,

A nation saved, a race delivered!

No. XI.

MR. HOSEA BIGLOW'S SPEECH
IN MARCH MEETING.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ATLANTIC
MONTHLY.

JAALAM, April 5, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR, —

(an' noticin' by your kiver that you 're
some dearer than wut you wuz, I en-
close the deffrence) I dunno ez I know
jest how to interdroce this las' perduc-
tion of my mews, ez Parson Willber
allus called 'em, which is goin' to *be*
the last an' *stay* the last onless sunthin'
pertikler sh'd interfear which I don't
expec' ner I wun't yield tu ef it wuz ez
pressin' ez a deppity Shiriff. Sence
Mr. Wilbur's disease I hev n't hed no
one that could dror out my talons. He
ust to kind o' wine me up an' set the
penderlum agoin' an' then somehow I
seemed to go on tick as it wear tell I
run down, but the noo minister ain't
of the same brewin' nor I can't seem
to git ahold of no kine of huming nater

in him but sort of slide rite off as you
du on the eedge of a mow. Minny-
steeril natur is wal enough an' a site
better 'n most other kines I know on,
but the other sort sech as Welbor hed
wuz of the Lord's makin' an' naterally
more wonderfle an' sweet tastin' least-
ways to me so fur as heerd from. He
used to interdooce 'em smooth ez ile
athout sayin' nothin' in pertickler an' I
misdoubt he did n't set so much by the
sec'nd Ceres as wut he done by the
Fust, fact, he let on onct that his mine
misgive him of a sort of fallin' off in
spots. He wuz as outspoken as a nor-
wester *he* wuz, but I tole him I hoped
the fall wuz from so high up that a fel-
ler could ketch a good many times fust
afore comin' bunt onto the ground as I
see Jethro C. Swett from the meetin'
house steeple up to th' old perrish, an'
took up for dead but he 's alive now an'
spry as wut you be. Turnin' of it over
I reclected how they ust to put wut
they called Argymunce onto the frunts
of poymns, like poorches afore housen
whare you could rest ye a spell whilst
you wuz concludin' whether you 'd go
in or nut espeshully ware tha wuz dar-
ters, though I most allus found it the
best plen to go in fust an' think after-
wards an' the gals likes it best tu. I
dno as speechis ever hez any argimunts
to 'em, I never see none that hed an' I
guess they never du but tha must allus
be a B'ginnin' to everythin' athout it is
Eternity so I 'll begin rite away an'
anybody may put it afore any of his
speeches ef it soots an' welcome. I
don't claim no paytent.

THE ARGYMUNT.

Interducshin, w'ich may be skipt.
Begins by talkin' about himself: thet 's
jest natur an' most gin'ally allus pleas-
in', I b'leve I 've notist, to *one* of the
cumpany, an' thet 's more than wut you
can say of most speshes of talkin'.
Nex' comes the gittin' the goodwill of
the orjunce by lettin' 'em gether from
wut you kind of ex'dentally let drop
thet they air about East, A one, an' no
mistaik, skare 'em up an' take 'em as

they rise. Spring interdooced with a few approput flours. Speach finally begins witch nobuddy need n't feel obolygated to read as I never read 'em an' never shell this one ag'in. Subjick staited; expanded; delayed; extended. Pump lively. Subjick staited ag'in so's to avide all mistaiks. Ginnle remarks; continoood; kerried on; pushed funder; kind o' gin out. Subjick restaited; dielooted; stirred up. permis-coous. Pump ag'in. Gits back to where he sot out. Can't seem to stay thair. Ketches into Mr. Seaward's hair. Breaks loose ag'in an' staitis his subjick; stretches it; turns it; folds it; onfolds it; folds it ag'in so's 't no one can't find it. Argoos with an im-edginary bean thet ain't aloud to say nothin' in repleye. Gives him a real good dressin' an' is settysfide he's rite. Gits into Johnson's hair. No use tryin' to git into his head. Gives it up. Hez to stait his subjick ag'in; doos it back'ards, sideways, eendways, criss-cross, bevellin', noways. Gits finally red on it. Concluds. Concluds more. Reads some xtrax. Sees his subjick a-nosin' round arter him ag'in. Tries to avide it. Wun't du. Misstates it. Can't conjectur' no other plawsable way of staytin' on it. Tries pump. No fx. Finely concluds to conclud. Yeels the flore.

You kin spall an' punctoote thet as you please. I allus do, it kind of puts a noo soot of close onto a word, thiser funattick spellin' doos an' takes 'em out of the prissen dress they wair in the Dixonary. Ef I squeeze the cents out of 'em it 's the main thing, an' wut they wuz made for; wut 's left 's jest pummis.

Mistur Wilbur sez he to me onct, sez he, "Hosee," sez he, "in littery-toor the only good thing is Natur. It 's amazin' hard to come at," sez he, "but onct git it an' you've gut everythin'. Wut 's the sweetest small on airth?" sez he. "Noomone hay," sez I, pooty bresk, for he wuz allus hankerin' round in hayin. "Nawthin' of the kine," sez he. "My leetle Huldy's breath," sez I ag'in. "You 're a good lad," sez

he, his eyes sort of ripplin' like, for he lost a babe onct nigh about her age, — "You 're a good lad; but 't ain't thet nuther," sez he. "Ef you want to know," sez he, "open your winder of a mornin' et ary season, and you'll larn thet the best of perfooms is jest fresh air, *fresh air*," sez he, emphysizin', "athout no mixtur. Thet 's wut I call natur in writin', and it bathes my lungs and washes 'em sweet whenever I git a whiff on 't," sez he. I offen think o' thet when I set down to write, but the winders air so ept to git stuck, an' breakin' a pane costs sunthin'.

Yourn for the last time,

Nut to be continoood,

HOSEA BIGLOW.

I DON'T much s'pose, hows'ever I should
plen it,
I could git boosted into th' House or
Sennit, —
Nut while the towegged gab-machine 's
so plenty,
'Nablin' one man to du the talk o'
twenty;
I 'm one o' them thet finds it ruther
hard
To manyfactur' wisdom by the yard,
An' maysure off, accordin' to demand,
The piece-goods el'kence that I keep
on hand,
The same ole pattern runnin' thru an'
thru,
An' nothin' but the customer thet 's
new.
I sometimes think, the funder on I go,
Thet it gits harder to feel sure I know,
An' when I 've settled my ideas, I find
'T warn't I sheered most in makin' up
my mind;
'T wuz this an' thet an' t' other thing
thet done it,
Sunthin' in th' air, I could n' seek nor
shun it.
Mos' folks go off so quick now in dis-
cussion,
All th' ole flint locks seems altered to
percussion,
Whilst I in agin' sometimes git a hin'

Thet I 'm percussion changin' back to
flint ;

Wal, ef it 's so, I ain't agoin' to werrit,
For th' ole Queen's-arm hez this per-
tickler merit, —

It gives the mind a hahnsome wedth o'
margin

To kin' o' make its will afore discharg-
in' :

I can't make out but jest one ginnle
rule, —

No man need go an' *make* himself a
fool,

Nor judgment ain't like mutton, thet
can't bear

Cookin' tu long, nor be took up tu rare.

Ez I wuz say'n', I hain't no chance to
speak

So 's 't all the country dreads me onct a
week,

But I 've consid'ble o' thet sort o' head
Thet sets to home an' thinks wut *might*

be said,

The sense thet grows an' werrits under-
neath,

Comin' belated like your wisdom-teeth,
An' git so el'kent, sometimes, to my

gardin

Thet I don' vally public life a fardin'.
Our Parson Wilbur (blessin's on his

head !)

'Mongst other stories of ole times he
hed,

Talked of a feller thet rehearsed his
spreads

Beforehan' to his rows o' kebbige-
heads,

(Ef 't war n't Demossenes, I guess 't
wuz Sisro,)

Appealin' fust to thet an' then to this
row,

Accordin' ez he thought thet his ideas
Their diff runt ev'riges o' brains 'ould

please ;

“ An' ,” sez the Parson, “ to hit right,
you must

Git used to maysurin' your hearers fust ;
For, take my word for 't, when all 's

come an' past,
The kebbige-heads 'll cair the day et
last ;

Th' ain't ben a meetin' sence the worl'
begun

But they made (raw or bil^l ones) ten
to one.”

I 've allus foun' 'em, I allow, sence
then

About ez good for talkin' to ez men ;
They 'll take edvice, like other folks, to

keep,

(To use it 'ould be holdin' on 't tu
cheap,)

They listen wal, don' kick up when you
scold 'em,

An' ef they've tongues, hev sense
enough to hold 'em ;

Though th' ain't no denger we shall
lose the breed,

I gin'lly keep a score or so for seed,
An' when my sappiness gits spry in

spring,

So 's 't my tongue itches to run on full
swing,

I fin' 'em ready-planted in March-
meetin',

Warm ez a lyceum-audience in their
grætin',

An' pleased to hear my spoutin' frum
the fence, —

Comin', ez 't doos, entirely free 'f ex-
pense.

This year I made the follerin' observa-
tions

Extrump'ry, like most other tri'ls o'
patience,

An', no reporters bein' sent express
To work their abstrac's up into a mess

Ez like th' oridg'nal ez a woodcut
pictur'

Thet chokes the life out like a boy-
constrictor,

I 've writ 'em out, an' so avide all
jeal'sies

'Twixt nonsense o' my own an' some
one's else's.

(N. B. Reporters gin'lly git a hint
To make dull orjunces seem 'live in

print,
An', ez I hev t' report myself, I vum,

I 'll put th' applauses where they 'd
ough' to come !)

MY FELLER KEBBIGE-HEADS, who look
so green,

I vow to gracious thet ef I coul'd drecn

The world of all its hearers but jest you,
 'T would leave 'bout all tha' is wuth
 talkin' to,
 An' you, my ven'able ol' frien's, thet
 show
 Upon your crowns a sprinklin' o' March
 snow,
 Ez ef mild Time had christened every
 sense
 For wisdom's church o' second inno-
 cence,
 Nut Jest's winter, no, no sech a thing,
 But jest a kin' o' slippin'-back o'
 spring, — [Sev'ril noses blowed.]
 We 've gathered here, ez ushle, to de-
 cide
 Which is the Lord's an' which is Sat-
 tan's side,
 Coz all the good or evil thet can heppen
 Is 'long o' which on 'em you choose for
 Cappen. [Cries o' "Thet's so!"]
 Aprul's come back; the swellin' buds
 of oak
 Dim the fur hillsides with a purplish
 smoke;
 The brooks are loose an', singing to be
 seen,
 (Like gals,) make all the hollers soft
 an' green;
 The birds are here, for all the season's
 late;
 They take the sun's height an' don't
 never wait;
 Soon 'z he officially declares it's spring
 Their light hearts lift 'em on a north-
 'ard wing,
 An' th' ain't an acre, fur ez you can hear,
 Can't by the music tell the time o' year;
 But thet white dove Carliny scared
 away,
 Five year ago, jes' sech an Aprul day;
 Peace, that we hoped 'ould come an'
 build last year
 An' coo by every housedoor, is n't
 here, —
 No, nor wun't never be, for all our jaw,
 Till we're ez brave in pol'tics ez in war!
 O Lord, ef folks wuz made so's 't they
 could see
 The begnet-pint there is to an idee!
 [Sensation.]
 Ten times the danger in 'em th' is in
 steel;

They run your soul thru an' you never
 feel,
 But crawl about an' seem to think
 you're livin',
 Poor shells o' men, nut wuth the Lord's
 forgivin',
 Till you come bunt ag'in a real live fect,
 An' go to pieces when you'd ough' to
 ect!
 Thet kin' o' begnet's wut we're cross-
 in' now,
 An' no man, fit to nevvigate a scow,
 'Ould stan' expectin' help from King-
 dom Come,
 While t' other side druv their cold iron
 home.
 My frien's, you never gethered from my
 mouth,
 No, nut one word ag'in the South ez
 South,
 Nor th' ain't a livin' man, white, brown,
 nor black,
 Gladder 'n wut I should be to take 'em
 back;
 But all I ask of Uncle Sam is fust
 To write up on his door, "No goods on
 trust";
 [Cries of "Thet's the ticket!"]
 Give us cash down in ekle laws for all,
 An' they'll be snug inside afore nex'
 fall.
 Give wut they ask, an' we shell hev
 Jamaker,
 Wuth minus some consid'able an acre;
 Give wut they need, an' we shell git
 'fore long
 A nation all one piece, rich, peacefle,
 strong;
 Make 'em Amerikin, an' they'll begin
 To love their country ez they loved
 their sin;
 Let 'em stay Southun, an' you 've kep'
 a sore
 Ready to fester ez it done afore.
 No mortle man can boast of perfic'
 vision,
 But the one moleblin' thing is Indecis-
 ion,
 An' th' ain't no futur' for the man nor
 state
 Thet out of j-u-s-t can't spell great.
 Some folks 'ould call thet reddikle; do
 you?

'T was commonsense afore the war wuz thru ;
Thet loaded all our guns an' made 'em speak
 So 's't Europe heard 'em clearn acrost the creek ;
 "They're drivin' o' their spiles down now," sez she,
 "To the hard grennit o' God's fust idee ;
 Ef they reach that, Democ'cy need n't fear
 The tallest airthquakes *we* can git up here."
 Some call 't insultin' to ask *any* pledge,
 An' say 't will only set their teeth on edge,
 But folks you've jest licked, fur 'z I ever see,
 Are 'bout ez mad 'z they wal know how to be ;
 It's better than the Rebs themselves expected
 'Fore they see Uncle Sam wilt down henpected ;
 Be kind 'z you please, but fustly make things fast,
 For plain Truth's all the kindness thet 'll last ;
 Ef treason is a crime, ez *some* folks say,
 How could we punish it a milder way
 Than sayin' to 'em, "Brethren, lookee here,
 We'll jes' divide things with ye, sheer an' sheer,
 An sence both come o' pooty strong-backed daddies,
 You take the Darkies, ez we've took the Paddies ;
 Ign'ant an' poor we took 'em by the hand,
 An' they're the bones an' sinners o' the land."
 I ain't o' them thet fancy there 's a loss on
 Every inves'tment thet don't start from Bos'on ;
 But I know this: our money's safest trusted
 In sunthin', come wut will, thet *can't* be busted,
 An' thet's the old Amerikin idec,
 To make a man a Man an' let him be.
 [Gret applause.]

Ez for their l'yalty, don't take a goad to 't,
 But I do' want to block their only road to 't
 By lettin' 'em believe thet they can git Mor'n wut they lost, out of our little wit :
 I tell ye wut, I 'm 'fraid we 'll drif' to leeward
 'Thout we can put more stiffenin' into Seward ;
 He seems to think Columby'd better ect
 Like a scared widder with a boy stiff-necked
 Thet stomps an' swears he wun't come in to supper ;
 She mus' set up for him, ez weak ez Tupper,
 Keepin' the Constitootion on to warm,
 Tell he 'll except her 'pologies in form :
 The neighbors tell her he's a cross-grained cuss
 Thet needs a hidin' 'fore he comes to wus ;
 "No," sez Ma Seward, "he's ez good 'z the best,
 All he wants now is sugar-plums an' rest" ;
 "He sarsed my Pa," sez one ; "He stoned my son,"
 Another edds. "O, wal, 't wuz jest his fun."
 "He tried to shoot our Uncle Samwell dead."
 "'T wuz only tryin' a noo gun he hed."
 "Wal, all we ask 's to hev it understood
 You 'll take his gun away from him for good ;
 We don't, wal, nut exac'ly, like his play,
 Seein' he allus kin' o' shoots our way.
 You kill your fattred calves to no good eend,
 'Thout his fust sayin', 'Mother, I hev sinned !'"
 ["Amen !" frum Deac'n Greenleaf.]
 The Pres'dunt *he* thinks thet the slick-est plan
 'Ould be t' allow thet he's our on'y man,
 An' thet we fit thru all thet drefle war
 Jes' for his private glory an' eclor ;

For th' ain't no chance o' healin' while
they think
Thet law an' gov'ment 's only printer's
ink ;
I mus' confess I thank him for dis-
coverin'
The curus way in which the States are
sovereign ;
They ain't nut *quite* enough so to rebel,
But, when they fin' it 's costly to raise
h —, [A groan from Deac'n G.]
Why, then, for jes' the same superl'-
tive reason,
They're 'most too much so to be tetched
for treason ;
They *can't* go out, but ef they somehow
du,
Their sovereignty don't nowadays go out
tu ;
The State goes out, the sovereignty
don't stir,
But stays to keep the door ajar for her.
He thinks secession never took 'em out,
An' mebbly he 's correc', but I mis-
doubt ;
Ef they war n't out, then why, 'n the
name o' sin,
Make all this row 'bout lettin' of 'em
in ?
In law, p'r'aps nut ; but there 's a dif-
ference, ruther,
Betwixt your mother-'n-law an' real
mother, [Derisive cheers.]
An' I, for one, shall wish they 'd all
been *som'eres*,
Long 'z U. S. Texes are sech reg'lar
comers.
But, O my patience ! must we wriggle
back
Into th' ole crooked, pettyfoggin' track,
When our artil'ry-wheels a road hev
cut
Stret to our purpose ef we keep the rut ?
'War 's jes' dead waste excep' to wipe
the slate
Clean for the cyph'rin of some nobler
fate. [Applause.]
Ez for dependin' on their oaths an thet,
'T wun't bind 'em mor 'n the ribbin
roun' my het ;
I heard a fable once from Othniel
Starns,

That pints it slick ez weathercocks do
barns ;
Onct on a time the wolves hed certing
rights
Inside the fold ; they used to sleep there
nights.
An', bein' cousins o' the dogs, they
took
Their turns et watchin', reg'lar ez a
book ;
But somehow, when the dogs hed gut
asleep,
Their love o' mutton beat their love o'
sheep,
Till gradilly the shepherds come to see
Things war n't agoin' ez they 'd ough'
to be ;
So they sent off a deacon to remonstrate
Along 'th the wolves an' urge 'em to
go on straight ;
They did n' seem to set much by the
deacon,
Nor preachin' did n' cow 'em, nut to
speak on ;
Fin'ly they swore thet they 'd go out
an' stay,
An' hev their fill o' mutton every day ;
Then dogs an' shepherds, after much
hard dammin',
[Groan from Deac'n G.]
Turned tu an' give 'em a tormented
lammin'.
An' sez, "Ye sha' n't go out, the mur-
rain rot ye.
To keep us wastin' half our time to
watch ye !"
But then the question come, How live
together
'Thout losin' sleep, nor nary yew nor
wether ?
Now there wuz some dogs (noways
wuth their keep)
Thet sheered their cousins' tastes an'
sheered the sheep ;
They sez, "Be gin'rous, let 'em swear
right in,
An', ef they backslide, let 'em swear
ag'in ;
Jes' let 'em put on sheep-skins whilst
they 're swearin' :
To ask for more 'ould be beyond all
bearin'."
"Be gin'rous for yourselves, where *you*
're to pay,

Thet 's the best prectice," sez a shep-herd gray ;
 " Ez for their oaths they wun't be wuth a button,
 Long 'z you don't cure 'em o' their taste for mutton ;
 Th' ain't but one solid way, howe'er you puzzle :
 Tell they 're converted, let 'em wear a muzzle."

[Cries of " Bully for you ! "]

I 've noticed that each half-baked scheme's abettors
 Are in the hebbit o' producin' letters
 Writ by all sorts o' never-heard-on-fellers,
 'Bout ez oridge'nal ez the wind in bellers ;
 I 've noticed, tu, it's the quack med'-cines gits
 (An' needs) the grettest heaps o' stiffy-kits ;

[Two apothekeries goes out.]

Now, sence I lef' off creepin' on all fours,
 I hain't ast no man to endorse my course ;
 It's full ez cheap to be your own endorser,
 An' ef I 've made a cup, I 'll fin' the saucer ;
 But I 've some letters here from t'other side,
 An' them 's the sort thet helps me to decide ;
 Tell me for wut the copper-comp'nies hanker,
 An' I 'll tell you jest where it's safe to anchor.

[Faint hiss.]

Fus'ly the Hon'ble B. O. Sawin writes
 Thet for a spell he could 'n sleep o' nights,
 Puzzlin' which side wuz preudentest to pin to,
 Which wuz th' ole homestead, which the temp'ry leanto :
 Et fust he jedged 't would right-side-up his pan
 To come out ez a 'ridge'nal Union man,
 " But now," he sez, " I ain't nut quite so fresh ;
 The winnin' horse is goin' to be Secesh ;

You might, las' spring, hev eas'ly walked the course,
 'Fore we contrived to dōctor th' Union horse ;
 Now *we*'re the ones to walk aroun' the nex' track :
 Jest you take hold an' read the follerin' extrac',
 Out of a letter I received last week
 From an ole frien' thet never sprung a leak,
 A Nothun Dem'crat o' th' ole Jarsey blue,
 Born copper-sheathed an' copper-fastened tu."

" These four years past it hez been tough
 To say which side a feller went for ;
 Guideposts all gone, roads muddy 'n' rough,
 An' nothin' duin' wut 't wuz meant for ;
 Pickets a-firin' left an' right,
 Both sides a lettin' rip et sight, —
 Life warn't wuth hardly payin' rent for.

" Columby gut her back up so,
 It war n't no use a-tryin' to stop her, —
 War's emptin's riled her very dough
 An' made it rise an' act improper ;
 'T wuz full ez much ez I could du
 To jes' lay low an' worry thru,
 'Thout hevin' to sell out my copper.

" Afore the war your mod'rit men
 Could set an' sun 'em on the fences,
 Cyph'rin' the chances up, an' then
 Jump off which way bes' paid expenses ;
 Sence, 't wuz so resky ary way,
 I did n't hardly darst to say
 I 'greed with Paley's Evidences.

[Groan from Deac'n G.

" Ask Mac ef tryin' to set the fence
 War n't like bein' rid upon a rail on 't,
 Headin' your party with a sense
 O' bein' tipjint in the tail on 't,
 And tryin' to think thet, on the whole,
 You kin' o' quasi own your soul
 When Belmont 's gut a bill o' sale on 't ?
 [Three cheers for Grant and Sherman.

" Come peace, I sposed thet folks 'ould like
 Their pol'tics done ag'in by proxy

Give their noo loves the bag an' strike
A fresh trade with their reg'lar doxy ;
But the drag 's broke, now slavery 's
gone,
An' there 's gret resk they 'll blunder on,
Ef they ain't stopped, to real Democ'cy.

"We 've gut an awful row to hoe
In this 'ere job o' reconstructin' ;
Folks dunno skurce which way to go,
Where th' ain't some boghole to be
ducked in ;
But one thing 's clear ; there *is* a crack,
Ef we pry hard, 'twixt white an' black,
Where the old makebate can be tucked
in.

"No white man sets in airth's broad
aisle

That I ain't willin' t' own ez brother,
An' ef he 's heppened to strike ile,
I dunno, fin'ly, but I 'd ruther ;
An' Paddies, long 'z they vote all right,
Though they ain't jest a nat'ral white,
I hold one on 'em good 'z another.

[Applause.]

"Wut *is* there lef' I 'd like to know,
Ef 't ain't the difference o' color,
To keep up self-respec' an' show
The human natur' of a fullah ?
Wut good in bein' white, onless
It 's fixed by law, nut lef' to guess,
That we are smarter an' they duller ?

"Ef we 're to hev our ekle rights,
'T wun't du to 'low no competition ;
Th' ole debt doo us for bein' whites
Ain't safe onless we stop th' emission
O' these noo notes, whose specie base
Is human natur', 'thout no trace
O' shape, nor color, nor condition.

[Continood applause.]

"So fur I 'd writ an' could n' jedge
Aboard wut boat I 'd best take pessige,
My brains all mincemeat, 'thout no
edge

Upon 'em more than tu a sessige,
But now it seems ez though I see
Sunthin' resemlin' an idee,
Sence Johnson's speech an' veto mes-
sage.

"I like the speech best, I confess,
The logic, preudence, an' good taste
on 't,
An' it 's so mad, I ruther guess
There 's some dependence to be placed
on 't : [Laughter.]

It 's narrer, but 'twixt you an' me,
Out o' the allies o' J. D.
A temp'ry party can be based on 't.

"Jes' to hold on till Johnson 's thru
An' dug his Presidential grave is,
An' *then!* — who knows but we could
slew

The country roun' to put in — ?
Wun't some folks rare up when we
pull

Out o' their eyes our Union wool
An' larn 'em wut a p'lit'cle shave is !

"O, did it seem 'z ef Providence
Could ever send a second Tyler ?
To see the South all back to once,
Reapin' the spiles o' the Freesiler,
Is cude ez though an ingeener
Should claim th' old iron for his sheer
Coz 't was himself that bust the biler !"

[Gret laughter.]

Thet tells the story ! Thet 's wut we
shall git

By tryin' squirtguns on the burnin'
Pit ;

For the day never comes when it 'll
du

To kick off Dooty like a worn-out shoe.
I seem to hear a whisperin' in the air,
A sighin' like, of unconsolated despair,
Thet comes from nowhere an' from
everywhere,

An' seems to say, "Why died we?
war n't it, then,

To settle, once for all, thet men wuz
men ?

O, airth's sweet cup snetched from us
barely tasted,

The grave's real chill is feelin' life wuz
wasted !

O, you we lef', long-lingerin' et the
door,

Lovin' you best, coz we loved Her the
more,

Thet Death, not we, had conquered,
we should feel

Ef she upon our memory turned her
heel,
An' unregretful throwed us all away
To flaunt it in a Blind Man's Holi-
day!"

My frien's, I 've talked nigh on to long
enough.

I hain't no call to bore ye coz ye 're
tough;

My lungs are sound, an' our own v'ice
delights

Our ears, but even kebbige-heads hez
rights.

It 's the las' time thet I shell e'er ad-
dress ye,

But you 'll soon fin' some new torment-
or: bless ye!

[Tumult'ous applause and cries of "Go on!"
"Don't stop!"]

GLOSSARY.

A.

Act'lly, *actually*.
 Air, *are*.
 Airth, *earth*.
 Airy, *area*.
 Aree, *area*.
 Arter, *after*.
 Ax, *ask*.

B.

Beller, *bellow*.
 Bellowses, *lungs*.
 Ben, *been*.
 Bile, *boil*.
 Bimeby, *by and by*.
 Blurt out, *to speak bluntly*.
 Bust, *burst*.
 Buster, *a roisiering blade*; used also as a general superlative.

C.

Caird, *carried*.
 Cairn, *carrying*.
 Caleb, *a turncoat*.
 Cal'late, *calculate*.
 Cass, *a person with two lives*.
 Close, *clothes*.
 Cockerel, *a young cock*.
 Cocktail, *a kind of drink*; also, *an ornament peculiar to soldiers*.
 Convention, *a place where people are imposed on*; *a juggler's show*.
 Coons, *a cant term, for a now defunct party*; derived, perhaps, from the fact of their being commonly *up a tree*.
 Cornwallis, *a sort of muster in masquerade*; supposed to have had its origin soon after the Revolution, and to commemorate the surrender of

Lord Cornwallis. It took the place of the old Guy Fawkes procession.
 Crooked stick, *a perverse, forward person*.
 Cunnle, *a colonel*.
 Cus, *a curse*; also, *a pitiful fellow*.

D.

Darsn't, used indiscriminately, either in singular or plural number, for *dare not, dares not, and dared not*.
 Deacon off, *to give the cue to*; derived from a custom, once universal, but now extinct, in our New England Congregational churches. An important part of the office of deacon was to read aloud the hymns *given out* by the minister, one line at a time, the congregation singing each line as soon as read.
 Demmercrat, leadin', *one in favor of extending slavery*; *a free-trade lecturer maintained in the custom-house*.
 Desput, *desperate*.
 Doos, *does*.
 Doughface, *a contented lick-spittle*; a common variety of Northern politician.
 Dror, *draw*.
 Du, *do*.
 Dunno, dno, *do not or does not know*.
 Dut, *dirt*.

E.

Eend, *end*.
 Ef, *if*.
 Emptins, *yeast*.
 Env'y, *envoy*.
 Everlasting, an intensive, without reference to duration.
 Ev'y, *every*.
 Ez, *as*.

F.

Fence, *on the*; said of one who halts between two opinions; a trimmer.

Fer, *for*.

Ferfle, ferful, *fearful*; also an intensive.

Fin', *find*.

Fish-skin, used in New England to clarify coffee.

Fix, *a difficulty, a nonplus*.

Foller, folly, *to follow*.

Forrerd, *forward*.

Frum, *from*.

Fur, *far*.

Furder, *farther*.

Furrer, *furrow*. Metaphorically, *to draw a straight furrow* is to live uprightly or decorously.

Fust, *first*.

G.

Gin, *gave*.

Git, *get*.

Gret, *great*.

Grit, *spirit, energy, pluck*.

Grout, *to sulk*.

Grouty, *crabbed, surly*.

Gum, *to impose on*.

Gump, *a foolish fellow, a dullard*.

Gut, *got*.

H.

Hed, *had*.

Heern, *heard*.

Hellum, *helm*.

Hendy, *handy*.

Het, *heated*.

Hev, *have*.

Hez, *has*.

Holl, *whole*.

Holt, *hold*.

Huf, *hoof*.

Hull, *whole*.

Hum, *home*.

Humbug, *General Taylor's anti-slavery*.

Hut, *hurt*.

I.

Idno, *I do not know*.

In'my, *enemy*.

Insines, *ensigns*; used to designate both the officer who carries the standard, and the standard itself.

Inter, intu, *into*.

J.

Jedge, *judge*.

Jest, *just*.

Jine, *join*.

Jint, *joint*.

Junk, *a fragment of any solid substance*.

K.

Keer, *care*.

Kep', *kept*.

Killock, *a small anchor*.

Kin', kin' o', kinder, *kind, kind of*.

L.

Lawth, *loath*.

Less, *let's, let us*.

Let daylight into, *to shoot*.

Let on, *to hint, to confess, to own*.

Lick, *to beat, to overcome*.

Lights, *the bowels*.

Lily-pads, *leaves of the water-lily*.

Long-sweetening, *molasses*.

M.

Mash, *marsh*.

Mean, *stingy, ill-natured*.

Min', *mind*.

N.

Nimepunce, *ninepence, twelve and a half cents*.

Nowers, *nowhere*.

O.

Offen, *often*.

Ole, *old*.

Ollers, olluz, *always*.

On, *of*; used before *it* or *them*, or at the end of a sentence, as *on't, on'em, nut ez ever I heerd on*.

On'y, *only*.

Ossifer, *officer*, (seldom heard).

P.

Peaked, *pointed*.
 Peek, *to peep*.
 Pickerel, *the pike, a fish*.
 Pint, *point*.
 Pocket full of rocks, *plenty of money*.
 Pooty, *pretty*.
 Pop'ler, *conceited, popular*.
 Pus, *purse*.
 Put out, *troubled, vexed*.

Q.

Quarter, *a quarter-dollar*.
 Queen's-arm, *a musket*.

R.

Resh, *rush*.
 Revelee, *the réveille*.
 Rile, *to trouble*.
 Riled, *angry; disturbed, as the sediment in any liquid*.
 Riz, *risen*.
 Row, *a long row to hoe, a difficult task*.
 Rugged, *robust*.

S.

Sarse, *abuse, impertinence*.
 Sartin, *certain*.
 Saxon, *sacristan, sexton*.
 Scaliest, *worst*.
 Scringe, *cringe*.
 Scrouge, *to crowd*.
 Sech, *such*.
 Set by, *valued*.
 Shakes, *great, of considerable consequence*.
 Shappoes, *chapeaux, cocked-hats*.
 Sheer, *share*.
 Shet, *shut*.
 Shut, *shirt*.
 Skeered, *scared*.
 Skeeter, *mosquito*.
 Skooting, *running, or moving swiftly*.
 Slarterin', *slaughtering*.
 Slim, *contemptible*.
 Snaked, *crawled like a snake; but to snake any one out is to track him to his hiding-place; to snake a thing out is to snatch it out*.

Soffies, *sofas*.

Sogerin', *soldiering; a barbarous amusement common among men in the savage state*.

Som'ers, *somewhere*.

So'st, *so as that*.

Sot, *set, obstinate, resolute*.

Spiles, *spoils; objects of political ambition*.

Spry, *active*.

Staddles, *stout stakes driven into the salt marshes, on which the hay-ricks are set, and thus raised out of the reach of high tides*.

Streaked, *uncomfortable, discomfited*.

Suckle, *circle*.

Sutthin', *something*.

Suttin, *certain*.

T.

Take on, *to sorrow*.

Talents, *talons*.

Taters, *potatoes*.

Tell, *till*.

Tetch, *touch*.

Tetch tu, *to be able; used always after a negative in this sense*.

Tollable, *tolerable*.

Toot, *used derisively for playing on any wind instrument*.

Thru, *through*.

Thundering, *a euphemism common in New England, for the profane English expression devilish. Perhaps derived from the belief, common formerly, that thunder was caused by the Prince of the Air, for some of whose accomplishments consult Cotton Mather*.

Tu, *to, too; commonly has this sound when used emphatically, or at the end of a sentence. At other times it has the sound of t in tough, as, Ware ye goin' tu? Goin' ta Boston*.

U.

Ugly, *ill-tempered, intractable*.

Uncle Sam, *United States; the largest boaster of liberty and owner of slaves*.

Unrizzest, applied to dough or bread ;
heavy, most unrisen, or most inca-
pable of rising.

V.

V-spot, *a five-dollar bill.*
 Vally, *value.*

W.

Wake snakes, *to get into trouble.*
 Wal, *well* ; spoken with great delibera-
 tion, and sometimes with the *a* very
 much flattened, sometimes (but more
 seldom) very much broadened.
 Wannut, *walnut, (hickory.)*
 Ware, *where.*
 Ware, *were.*
 Whopper, *an uncommonly large lie ;*
 as, that General Taylor is in favor of
 the Wilmot Proviso.

Wig, *Whig* ; a party now dissolved.

Wunt, *will not.*

Wus, *worse.*

Wut, *what.*

Wuth, *worth* ; as, *Antislavery per-*
fessions 'fore 'lection aint with a
Bungtown copper.

Wuz, *was*, sometimes *were.*

Y.

Yaller, *yellow.*

Yeller, *yellow.*

Yellers, *a disease of peach-trees.*

Z.

Zach, Ole, *a second Washington, an*
antislavery slaveholder, a humane
buyer and seller of men and women,
a Christian hero generally.

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THE UNHAPPY LOT OF MR. KNOTT.

1850.

THE UNHAPPY LOT OF MR. KNOTT.

PART I.

SHOWING HOW HE BUILT HIS HOUSE
AND HIS WIFE MOVED INTO IT.

MY worthy friend, A. Gordon Knott,
From business snug withdrawn,
Was much contented with a lot
That would contain a Tudor cot
'Twixt twelve feet square of garden-
plot,
And twelve feet more of lawn.

He had laid business on the shelf
To give his taste expansion,
And, since no man, retired with pelf,
The building mania can shun,
Knott, being middle-aged himself,
Resolved to build (unhappy elf!)
A mediæval mansion.

He called an architect in counsel ;
"I want," said he, "a — you know
what,
(You are a builder, I am Knott,)
A thing complete from chimney-pot
Down to the very gronsel ;
Here 's a half-acre of good land ;
Just have it nicely mapped and
planned
And make your workmen drive on ;
Meadow there is, and upland too,
And I should like a water-view,
D' you think you could contrive one ?
(Perhaps the pump and trough would
do,
If painted a judicious blue ?)
The woodland I 've attended to :
(He meant three pines stuck up
askew,
Two dead ones and a live one.)
"A pocket-full of rocks 't would take
To build a house of free-stone,
But then it is not hard to make

What nowadays is *the* stone ;
The cunning painter in a trice
Your house's outside petrifies,
And people think it very gneiss
Without inquiring deeper ;
My money never shall be thrown
Away on such a deal of stone,
When stone of deal is cheaper."

And so the greenest of antiques
Was reared for Knott to dwell in ;
The architect worked hard for weeks
In venting all his private peaks
Upon the roof, whose crop of leaks
Had satisfied Fluellen ;
Whatever anybody had
Out of the common, good or bad,
Knott had it all worked well in,
A donjon-keep, where clothes might
dry,
A porter's lodge that was a sty,
A campanile slim and high,
Too small to hang a bell in ;
All up and down and here and there,
With Lord-knows-whats of round and
square
Stuck on at random everywhere, —
It was a house to make one stare,
All corners and all gables ;
Like dogs let loose upon a bear,
Ten emulous styles *staboyed* with care,
The whole among them seemed to tear,
And all the oddities to spare
Were set upon the stables.

Knott was delighted with a pile
Approved by fashion's leaders :
(Only he made the builder smile,
By asking, every little while,
Why that was called the Twodoor style,
Which certainly had *three* doors ?)
Yet better for this luckless man
If he had put a downright ban
Upon the thing *in limine* ;

For, though to quit affairs his plan,
 Ere many days, poor Knott began
 Perforce accepting draughts, that ran
 All ways — except up chimney ;
 The house, though painted stone to
 mock,
 With nice white lines round every block
 Some trepidation stood in,
 When tempests (with petrific shock,
 So to speak,) made it really rock,
 Though not a whit less wooden :
 And painted stone, howe'er well done,
 Will not take in the prodigal sun
 Whose beams are never quite at one
 With our terrestrial lumber ;
 So the wood shrank around the knots,
 And gaped in disconcerting spots,
 And there were lots of dots and rots
 And crannies without number,
 Wherethrough, as you may well pre-
 sume,
 The wind, like water through a flume,
 Came rushing in ecstatic,
 Leaving, in all three floors, no room
 That was not a rheumatic ;
 And, what with points and squares and
 rounds
 Grown shaky on their poises,
 The house at nights was full of pounds,
 Thumps, bumps, creaks, scratchings,
 raps — till — "Zounds !"
 Cried Knott, "this all goes beyond
 bounds ;
 I do not deal in tongues and sounds,
 Nor have I let my house and grounds
 To a family of Noyeses !"

But, though Knott's house was full of
 airs,

He had but one — a daughter ;
 And, as he owned much stocks and
 shares,

Many who wished to render theirs
 Such vain, unsatisfying cares,
 And needed wives to sew their tears,
 In matrimony sought her ;
 They vowed her gold they wanted not,
 Their faith would never falter,
 They longed to tie this single Knott
 In the Hymenæal halter ;
 So daily at the door they rang,
 Cards for the belle delivering,
 Or in the choir at her they sang,
 Achieving such a rapturous twang
 As set her nerves ashivering.

Now Knott had quite made up his
 mind

That Colonel Jones should have her ;
 No beauty he, but oft we find
 Sweet kernels 'neath a roughish rind,
 So hoped his Jenny 'd be resigned

And make no more palaver ;
 Glanced at the fact that love was blind,
 That girls were ratherish inclined

To pet their little crosses,
 Then nosologically defined
 The rate at which the system pined
 In those unfortunates who dined
 Upon that metaphoric kind
 Of dish — their own proboscis.

But she, with many tears and moans,
 Besought him not to mock her,
 Said 't was too much for flesh and
 bones

To marry mortgages and loans,
 That fathers' hearts were stocks and
 stones,

And that she 'd go, when Mrs. Jones,
 To Davy Jones's locker ;

Then gave her head a little toss
 That said as plain as ever was,
 If men are always at a loss

Mere womankind to bridle —
 To try the thing on woman cross
 Were fifty times as idle ;

For she a strict resolve had made
 And registered in private,
 That either she would die a maid,

Or else be Mrs. Doctor Slade,
 If woman could contrive it ;

And, though the wedding-day was set,
 Jenny was more so, rather,
 Declaring, in a pretty pet,
 That, howsoe'er they spread their net,
 She would out-Jennyral them yet,
 The colonel and her father.

Just at this time the Public's eyes
 Were keenly on the watch, a stir

Beginning slowly to arise
 About those questions and replies,
 Those raps that unwrapped mysteries

So rapidly at Rochester,
 And Knott, already nervous grown
 By lying much awake alone,

And listening, sometimes to a moan,
 And sometimes to a clatter,
 Whene'er the wind at night would rouse
 The gingerbread-work on his house,
 Or when some hasty-tempered mouse,

Behind the plastering, made a towse

About a family matter,
Began to wonder if his wife,
A paralytic half her life,

Which made it more surprising,
Might not to rule him from her urn,
Have taken a peripatetic turn
For want of exorcising.

This thought, once nestled in his head,
Ere long contagious grew, and spread
Infecting all his mind with dread,
Until at last he lay in bed
And heard his wife, with well-known
tread,

Entering the kitchen through the shed,
(Or was 't his fancy, mocking?)
Opening the pantry, cutting bread,
And then (she 'd been some ten years
dead)

Closets and drawers unlocking ;
Or, in his room (his breath grew thick)
He heard the long-familiar click
Of slender needles flying quick,
As if she knit a stocking ;
For whom?—he prayed that years
might flit

With pains rheumatic shooting,
Before those ghostly things she knit
Upon his unfleshed sole might fit,
He did not fancy it a bit,

To stand upon that footing ;
At other times, his frightened hairs

Above the bedclothes trusting,
He heard her, full of household cares,
(No dream entrapped in supper's
snares,

The foal of horrible nightmares,
But broad awake, as he declares,)
Go bustling up and down the stairs,
Or setting back last evening's chairs,

Or with the poker thrusting
The raked-up sea-coal's hardened
crust—

And—what ! impossible ! it must !
He knew she had returned to dust,
And yet could scarce his senses trust,
Hearing her as she poked and fussed
About the parlor, dusting !

Night after night he strove to sleep
And take his ease in spite of it ;
But still his flesh would chill and creep,
And, though two night-lamps he might
keep,

He could not so make light of it.
At last, quite desperate, he goes
And tells his neighbors all his woes,
Which did but their amount enhance ;
They made such mockery of his fears
That soon his days were of all jeers,
His nights of the rueful countenance ;
"I thought most folks," one neighbor
said,
"Gave up the ghost when they were
dead,"

Another gravely shook his head,
Adding, "from all we hear, it's
Quite plain poor Knott is going mad—
For how can he at once be sad
And think he's full of spirits?"
A third declared he knew a knife
Would cut this Knott much quicker,
"The surest way to end all strife,
And lay the spirit of a wife,
Is just to take and lick her !"
A temperance man caught up the word,
"Ah, yes," he groaned, "I've always
heard

Our poor friend somewhat slanted
Tow'rd taking liquor overmuch ;
I fear these spirits may be Dutch,
(A sort of gins, or something such,)
With which his house is haunted ;
I see the thing as clear as light, —
If Knott would give up getting tight,
Naught farther would be wanted" :
So all his neighbors stood aloof
And, that the spirits 'neath his roof
Were not entirely up to proof,
Unanimously granted.

Knott knew that cocks and sprites were
foes,
And so bought up, Heaven only knows
How many, though he wanted crows
To give ghosts caws, as I suppose,
To think that day was breaking ;
Moreover what he called his park,
He turned into a kind of ark
For dogs, because a little bark
Is a good tonic in the dark,
If one is given to waking ;
But things went on from bad to worse,
His curs were nothing but a curse.
And, what was still more shocking,
Foul ghosts of living fowl made scoff
And would not think of going off
In spite of all his cocking.

Shanghai, Bucks-counties, Domini-
ques,

Malays (that did n't lay for weeks,)

Polanders, Bantams, Dorkings,
(Waiving the cost, no trifling ill,

Since each brought in his little bill,)

By day or night were never still,

But every thought of rest would kill

With cacklings and with quorkings ;

Henry the Eighth of wives got free

By a way he had of axing ;

But poor Knott's Tudor henery

Was not so fortunate, and he

Still found his trouble waxing ;

As for the dogs, the rows they made,

And how they howled, snarled, barked
and bayed,

Beyond all human knowledge is ;

All night, as wide awake as gnats,

The terriers rumpused after rats,

Or, just for practice, taught their brats

To worry cast-off shoes and hats,

The bull-dogs settled private spats,

All chased imaginary cats,

Or raved behind the fence's slats

At real ones, or, from their mats,

With friends, miles off, held pleasant
chats,

Or, like some folks in white cravats,

Contemptuous of sharps and flats,

Sat up and sang dogsologies.

Meanwhile the cats set up a squall,

And, safe upon the garden-wall,

All night kept cat-a-walling,

As if the feline race were all,

In one wild cataleptic sprawl,

Into love's tortures falling.

PART II.

SHOWING WHAT IS MEANT BY A FLOW OF SPIRITS.

At first the ghosts were somewhat shy,

Coming when none but Knott was nigh,

And people said 't was all their eye,

(Or rather his) a flam, the sly

Digestion's machination ;

Some recommended a wet sheet,

Some a nice broth of pounded peat,

Some a cold flat-iron to the feet,

Some a decoction of lamb's-bleat,

Some a southwesterly grau. 1 what ;
Meat was by some pronounced unmeet,
Others thought fish most indiscreet,
And that 't was worse than all to eat
Of vegetables, sour or sweet,
(Except, perhaps, the skin of beet,)

In such a concatenation :

One quack his button gently plucks
And murmurs " biliary ducks ! "

Says Knott, " I never ate one " ;

But all, though brimming full of wrath,
Homœo, Allo, Hydropath,

Concurred in this — that t'other's path

To death's door was the straight one.

Still, spite of medical advice,

The ghosts came thicker, and a spice

Of mischief grew apparent ;

Nor did they only come at night,

But seemed to fancy broad daylight,

Till Knott, in horror and affright,

His unoffending hair rent ;

Whene'er with handkerchief on lap,

He made his elbow-chair a trap,

To catch an after-dinner nap,

The spirits, always on the tap,

Would make a sudden *rap, rap, rap,*

The half-spun cord of sleep to snap,

(And what is life without its nap

But threadbareness and mere mishap ?)

As 't were with a percussion cap

The trouble's climax capping ;

It seemed a party dried and grim

Of mummies had come to visit him,

Each getting off from every limb

Its multitudinous wrapping ;

Scratchings sometimes the walls ran

round,

The merest penny-weights of sound ;

Sometimes 't was only by the pound

They carried on their dealing,

A thumping 'neath the parlor floor,

Thump-bump-thump-bumping o'er and

o'er,

As if the vegetables in store

(Quiet and orderly before)

Were all together pealing ;

You would have thought the thing was

done

By the spirit of some son of a gun,

And that a forty-two-pounder,

Or that the ghost which made such

sounds

Could be none other than John Pounds,

Of Ragged Schools the founder.

Through three gradations of affright,
The awful noises reached their height ;

At first they knocked nocturnally,
Then, for some reason, changing quite,
(As mourners, after six months' flight,
Turn suddenly from dark to light,)

Began to knock diurnally,
And last, combining all their stocks,
(Scotland was ne'er so full of Knox,)
Into one Chaos (father of Nox,)

Nocte pluit — they showered knocks,
And knocked, knocked, knocked,
eternally ;

Ever upon the go, like buoys,
(Wooden sea-urchins,) all Knott's joys,
They turned to troubles and a noise
That preyed on him internally.

Soon they grew wider in their scope ;
Whenever Knott a door would ope,
It would ope not, or else elope
And fly back (curbless as a trope
Once started down a stanza's slope
By a bard that gave it too much rope —)

Like a clap of thunder slamming ;
And, when kind Jenny brought his hat,
(She always, when he walked, did that,)
Just as upon his head it sat,
Submitting to his settling pat —
Some unseen hand would jam it flat,
Or give it such a furious bat

That eyes and nose went cramming
Up out of sight, and consequently,
As when in life it paddled free,

His beaver caused much damning ;
If these things seem o'er-strained to be,
Read the account of Doctor Dee,
'T is in our college library ;
Read Wesley's circumstantial plea,
And Mrs. Crowe, more like a bee,
Sucking the nightshade's honeyed fee,
And Stilling's Pneumatology ;
Consult Scot, Glanvil, grave Wie-
zus, and both Mathers ; further see,
Webster, Casaubon, James First's trea-
tise, a right royal Q. E. D.
Writ with the moon in perigee,
Bodin de Demonomanie —
(Accent that last line gingerly)
All full of learning as the sea
Of fishes, and all disagree,
Save in *Sathanas apage* !
Or, what will surely put a flea
In unbelieving ears — with glee,

Out of a paper (sent to me
By some friend who forgot to P...
A...Y... — I use cryptography
Lest I his vengeful pen should dree —
His P...O...S...T...A...G...E...)

Things to the same effect I cut,
About the tantrums of a ghost,
Not more than three weeks since, at
most,

Near Stratford, in Connecticut.

Knott's Upas daily spread its roots,
Sent up on all sides livelier shoots,
And bore more pestilential fruits ;
The ghosts behaved like downright
brutes,

They snipped holes in his Sunday suits,
Practised all night on octave flutes,
Put peas (not peace) into his boots,
Whereof grew corns in season,
They scotched his sheets, and, what
was worse ;

Stuck his silk nightcap full of burs,
Till he, in language plain and terse,
(But much unlike a Bible verse,)
Swore he should lose his reason.

The tables took to spinning, too,
Perpetual yarns, and arm-chairs grew

To prophets and apostles ;
One footstool vowed that only he
Of law and gospel held the key,
That teachers of whate'er degree
To whom opinion bows the knee
Wern't fit to teach Truth's a. b. c.
And were (the whole lot) to a T

Mere fogies all and fossils ;
A teapoy, late the property
Of Knox's Aunt Keziah,
(Whom Jenny most irreverently
Had nicknamed her aunt-tipathy)
With tips emphatic claimed to be
The prophet Jeremiah ;

The tins upon the kitchen-wall,
Turned tintinnabulators all,
And things that used to come at call
For simple household services
Began to hop and whirl and prance,
Fit to put out of countenance
The *Commis* and *Grisettes* of France
Or Turkey's dancing Dervises.

Of course such doings, far and wide,
With rumors filled the country-side,

And (as it is our nation's pride
 To think a Truth not verified
 Till with majorities allied)
 Parties sprung up, affirmed, denied,
 And candidates with questions plied,
 Who, like the circus-riders, tried
 At once both hobbies to bestride,
 And each with his opponent vied
 In being inexplicit.
 Earnest inquirers multiplied ;
 Folks, whose tenth cousins lately died,
 Wrote letters long, and Knott replied ;
 All who could either walk or ride
 Gathered to wonder or deride,
 And paid the house a visit ;
 Horses were at his pine-trees tied,
 Mourners in every corner sighed,
 Widows brought children there that
 cried,
 Swarms of lean Seekers, eager-eyed,
 (People Knott never could abide,) -
 Into each hole and cranny pried
 With strings of questions cut and dried
 From the Devout Inquirer's Guide,
 For the wise spirits to decide —
 As, for example, is it
 True that the damned are fried or
 boiled ?
 Was the Earth's axis greased or oiled ?
 Who cleaned the moon when it was
 soiled ?
 How baldness might be cured or foiled ?
 How heal diseased potatoes ?
 Did spirits have the sense of smell ?
 Where would departed spinsters dwell ?
 If the late Zenas Smith were well ?
 If Earth were solid or a shell ?
 Were spirits fond of Doctor Fell ?
 Did the bull toll Cock-Robin's knell ?
 What remedy would bugs expel ?
 If Paine's invention were a sell ?
 Did spirits by Webster's system spell ?
 Was it a sin to be a belle ?
 Did dancing sentence folks to hell ?
 If so, then where most torture fell —
 On little toes or great toes ?
 If life's true seat were in the brain ?
 Did Ensign mean to marry Jane ?
 By whom, in fact, was Morgan slain ?
 Could matter ever suffer pain ?
 What would take out a cherry-stain ?
 Who picked the pocket of Seth Crane,
 Of Waldo precinct, State of Maine ?
 Was Sir John Franklin sought in vain ?

Did primitive Christians ever train ?
 What was the family-name of Cain ?
 Them spoons, were they by Betty
 ta'en ?
 Would earth-worm poultice cure a
 sprain ?
 Was Socrates so dreadful plain ?
 What teamster guided Charles's wain ?
 Was Uncle Ethan mad or sane,
 And could his will in force remain ?
 If not, what counsel to retain ?
 Did Le Sage steal Gil Blas from Spain ?
 Was Junius writ by Thomas Paine ?
 Were ducks discomfited by rain ?
 How did Britannia rule the main ?
 Was Jonas coming back again ?
 Was vital truth upon the wane ?
 Did ghosts, to scare folks, drag a chain ?
 Who was our Huldah's chosen swain ?
 Did none have teeth pulled without
 payin',
 Ere ether was invented ?
 Whether mankind would not agree,
 If the universe were tuned in C. ?
 What was it ailed Lucindy's knee ?
 Whether folks eat folks in Feejee ?
 Whether *his* name would end with T. ?
 If Saturn's rings were two or three,
 And what bump in Phrenology
 They truly represented ?
 These problems dark, wherein they
 groped,
 Wherewith man's reason vainly coped,
 Now that the spirit-world was oped,
 In all humility they hoped
 Would be resolved *instantly* ;
 Each of the miscellaneous rout
 Brought his, or her, own little doubt,
 And wished to pump the spirits out,
 Through his, or her, own private spout,
 Into his or her decanter.

PART III

WHEREIN IT IS SHOWN THAT THE
 MOST ARDENT SPIRITS ARE MORE
 ORNAMENTAL THAN USEFUL

Many a speculating wight
 Came by express-trains, day and night,
 To see if Knott would "sell his right,"
 Meaning to make the ghosts a sight —
 What they called a "meenaygerie" ;

One threatened, if he would not
"trade,"

His run of custom to invade,
(He could not these sharp folks per-
suade

That he was not, in some way, paid,)
And stamp him as a plagiarist,
By coming down, at one fell swoop,
With THE ORIGINAL KNOCKING
TROUPE,

Come recently from Hades,
Who (for a quarter-dollar heard)
Would ne'er rap out a hasty word
Whence any blame might be incurred
From the most fastidious ladies ;

The late lamented Jesse Soule
To stir the ghosts up with a pole
And be director of the whole,

Who was engaged the rather
For the rare merits he 'd combine,
Having been in the spirit line,
Which trade he only did resign,
With general applause, to shine,
Awful in mail of cotton fine,

As ghost of Hamlet's father !
Another fair plan reveals
Never yet hit on, which, he feels,
To Knott's religious sense appeals —
"We'll have your house set up on
wheels,

A speculation pious ;
For music, we can shortly find
A barrel-organ that will grind
Psalm-tunes, — an instrument designed
For the New England tour — refined
From secular drosses, and inclined
To an unworldly turn, (combined

With no sectarian bias ;)
Then, travelling by stages slow,
Under the style of Knott & Co.,
I would accompany the show
As moral lecturer, the foe
Of Rationalism ; you could throw
The rappings in, and make them go
Strict Puritan principles, you know,
(How *do* you make 'em? with your
toe?)

And the receipts which thence might
flow,

We could divide between us ;
Still more attractions to combine,
Beside these services of mine,
I will throw in a very fine
(It would do nicely for a sign)

Original Titian's Venus."'
Another offered handsome fees
If Knott would get Demosthenes
(Nay, his mere knuckles, for more ease)
To rap a few short sentences ;
Or if, for want of proper keys,
His Greek might make confusion,
Then just to get a rap from Burke,
To recommend a little work
On Public Elocution.

Meanwhile, the spirits made replies
To all the reverent *whats* and *whys*,
Resolving doubts of every size,
And giving seekers grave and wise,
Who came to know their destinies,

A rap-turous reception ;
When unbelievers void of grace
Came to investigate the place,
(Creatures of Sadducistic race,
With grovelling intellects and base,)
They could not find the slightest trace
To indicate deception ;

Indeed, it is declared by some
That spirits (of this sort) are glum,
Almost, or wholly, deaf and dumb,
And (out of self-respect) quite num
To sceptic natures cold and numb,
Who of *this* kind of Kingdom Come

Have not a just conception :
True, there were people who demurred
That, though the raps no doubt were
heard

Both under them and o'er them,
Yet, somehow, when a search they made,
They found Miss Jenny sore afraid,
Or Jenny's lover, Doctor Slade,
Equally awe-struck and dismayed,
Or Deborah, the chamber-maid,
Whose terrors not to be gainsaid,
In laughs hysteric were displayed,

Was always there before them ;
This had its due effect with some
Who straight departed, muttering,
Hum !

Transparent hoax ! and Gammon !
But these were few ; believing souls
Came, day by day, in larger shoals,
As the ancients to the windy holes
'Neath Delphi's tripod brought their
doles,

Or to the shrine of Ammon.

The spirits seemed exceeding tame,
Call whom you fancied, and he came ;

The shades august of eldest fame

You summoned with an awful ease ;

As grosser spirits gurgled out

From chair and table with a spout,

In Auerbach's cellar once, to flout

The senses of the rabble rout,

Where'er the gimlet twirled about

Of cunning Mephistophiles —

So did these spirits seem in store,

Behind the wainscot or the door,

Ready to thrill the being's core

Of every enterprising bore

With their astounding glamour ;

Whatever ghost one wished to hear,

By strange coincidence, was near

To make the past or future clear

(Sometimes in shocking grammar)

By raps and taps, now there, now

here —

It seemed as if the spirit queer

Of some departed auctioneer

Were doomed to practise by the year

With the spirit of his hammer ;

Whate'er you asked was answered, yet

One could not very deeply get

Into the obliging spirits' debt,

Because they used the alphabet

In all communications,

And new revealings (though sublime)

Rapped out, one letter at a time,

With boggles, hesitations,

Stoppings, beginnings o'er again,

And getting matters into train,

Could hardly overload the brain

With too excessive rations,

Since just to ask *if two and two*

Really make four? or, *How d' ye*
do?

And get the fit replies thereto

In the tramundane rat-tat-too,

Might ask a whole day's patience.

'T was strange ('mongst other things) to
find

In what odd sets the ghosts combined,

Happy forthwith to thump any

Piece of intelligence inspired,

The truth whereof had been inquired

By some one of the company ;

For instance, Fielding, Mirabeau,

Orator Henley, Cicero,

Paley, John Zisca, Marivaux,

Melancthon, Robertson, Junot,

Scaliger, Chesterfield, Rousseau,

Hakluyt, Boccaccio, South, De Foe,

Diaz, Josephus, Richard Roe,

Odin, Arminius, Charles *le gros*,

Tiresias, the late James Crow,

Casabianca, Grose, Prideaux,

Old Grimes, Young Norval, Swift.

Brissot,

Maimonides, the Chevalier D'O,

Socrates, Fenelon, Job, Stow,

The inventor of *Elixir pro*,

Euripides, Spinoza, Poe,

Confucius, Hiram Smith, and Fo,

Came (as it seemed, somewhat *de trop*)

With a disembodied Esquimaux,

To say that it was so and so,

With Franklin's expedition ;

One testified to ice and snow,

One that the mercury was low,

One that his progress was quite slow,

One that he much desired to go,

One that the cook had frozen his toe,

(Dissented from by Dandolo,

Wordsworth, Cynaegirus, Boileau,

La Hontan, and Sir Thomas Roe.)

One saw twelve white bears in a row,

One saw eleven and a crow,

With other things we could not know

(Of great statistic value, though)

By our mere mortal vision.

Sometimes the spirits made mistakes,

And seemed to play at ducks and drakes

With bold inquiry's heaviest stakes

In science or in mystery ;

They knew so little (and that wrong)

Yet rapped it out so bold and strong,

One would have said the entire throng

Had been Professors of History ;

What made it odder was, that those

Who, you would naturally suppose,

Could solve a question, if they chose,

As easily as count their toes,

Were just the ones that blundered ;

One day, Ulysses happening down,

A reader of Sir Thomas Browne

And who (with him) had wondered

What song it was the Sirens sang,

Asked the shrewd Ithacan — *bang !*

bang !

With this response the chamber rang,

" I guess it was Old Hundred."

And Franklin, being asked to name

The reason why the lightning came,

Replied, " Because it thundered."

On one sole point the ghosts agreed,
 One fearful point, than which, indeed,
 Nothing could seem absurder ;
 Poor Colonel Jones they all abused,
 And finally downright accused

The poor old man of murder ;
 'T was thus ; by dreadful raps was
 shown

Some spirit's longing to make known
 A bloody fact, which he alone
 Was privy to, (such ghosts more prone
 In Earth's affairs to meddle are ;)

Who are you ? with awe-stricken looks,
 All ask : his airy knuckles he crooks,
 And raps, " I was Eliab Snooks,

That used to be a pedler ;
 Some on ye still are on my books ! "
 Whereat, to inconspicuous nooks,
 (More fearing this than common
 spoofs,)

Shrank each indebted meddler ;
 Further the vengeful ghost declared
 That while his earthly life was spared,
 About the country he had fared,

A duly recognised follower
 Of that much-wandering trade that wins
 Slow profit from the sale of tins

And various kinds of hollow-ware ;
 That Colonel Jones enticed him in,
 Pretending that he wanted tin,
 There slew him with a rolling-pin,
 Hid him in a potato-bin,

And (the same night) him ferried
 Across Great Pond to t'other shore,
 And there, on land of Widow Moore,
 Just where you turn to Larkin's store,

Under a rock him buried ;
 Some friends (who happened to be by)
 He called upon to testify
 That what he said was not a lie,

And that he did not stir this
 Foul matter, out of any spite
 But from a simple love of right ; —

Which statements the Nine Wor-
 thies,

Rabbi Akiba, Charlemagne,
 Seth, Colley Cibber, General Wayne,
 Cambyzes, Tasso, Tubal-Cain,
 The owner of a castle in Spain,
 Jehanghire, and the Widow of Nain,
 (The friends aforesaid,) made more plain

And by loud raps attested ;
 To the same purport testified
 Plato, John Wilkes, and Colonel Pride

Who knew said Snooks before he died,
 Had in his wares invested,
 Thought him entitled to belief
 And freely could concur, in brief,
 In everything the rest did.

Eliab this occasion seized,
 (Distinctly here the spirit sneezed,)
 To say that he should ne'er be eased
 Till Jenny married whom she pleased,

Free from all checks and urgin's,
 (This spirit dropt his final g's)
 And that, unless Knott quickly sees
 This done, the spirits to appease,
 They would come back his life to tease,
 As thick as mites in ancient cheese,
 And let his house on an endless lease
 To the ghosts (terrific rappers these
 And veritable Eumenides)

Of the Eleven Thousand Virgins !

Knott was perplexed and shook his
 head,

He did not wish his child to wed
 With a suspected murderer,
 (For, true or false, the rumor spread,)
 But as for this roiled life he led,
 " It would not answer," so he said,
 " To have it go no furderer."

At last, scarce knowing what it meant,
 Reluctantly he gave consent
 That Jenny, since 't was evident
 That she *would* follow her own bent,
 Should make her own election ;
 For that appeared the only way
 These frightful noises to allay
 Which had already turned him gray
 And plunged him in dejection.

Accordingly, this artless maid
 Her father's ordinance obeyed,
 And, all in whitest crape arrayed,
 (Miss Pulsifer the dresses made
 And wishes here the fact displayed
 That she still carries on the trade,
 The third door south from Bagg's Ar-
 cade,)

A very faint " I do " essayed
 And gave her hand to Hiram Slade,
 From which time forth, the ghosts were
 laid,

And ne'er gave trouble after ;
 But the Selectmen, be it known,

Dug underneath the aforesaid stone,
Where the poor pedler's corpse was
thrown,

And found thereunder a jaw-bone,
Though, when the crowner sat thereon,
He nothing hatched, except alone

Successive broods of laughter ;
It was a frail and dingy thing,
In which a grinder or two did cling,
In color like molasses,
Which surgeons, called from far and
wide,

Upon the horror to decide,
Having put on their glasses,
Reported thus — " To judge by looks,
These bones, by some queer hooks or
crooks,

May have belonged to Mr. Snooks,
But, as men deepest-read in books
Are perfectly aware, bones,
If buried fifty years or so,
Lose their identity and grow
From human bones to bare bones."

Still, if to Jaalam you go down,
You 'll find two parties in the town,
One headed by Benaiah Brown,
And one by Perez Tinkham ;
The first believe the ghosts all through
And vow that they shall never rue
The happy chance by which they knew
That people in Jupiter are blue,
And very fond of Irish stew,

Two curious facts which Prince Lee
Boo

Rapped clearly to a chosen few —
Whereas the others think 'em
A trick got up by Doctor Slade
With Deborah the chamber-maid
And that sly cretur Jinny.

That all the revelations wise,
At which the Brownites made big eyes,
Might have been given by Jared Keyes,

A natural fool and ninny,
And, last week, did n't Eliab Snooks
Come back with never better looks,
As sharp as new-bought mackerel
hooks,

And bright as a new pin, eh ?
Good Parson Wilbur, too, avers
(Though to be mixed in parish stirs
Is worse than handling chestnut-burrs)
That no case to his mind occurs
Where spirits ever did converse
Save in a kind of guttural Erse,
(So say the best authorities ;)

And that a charge by raps conveyed,
Should be most scrupulously weighed

And searched into, before it is
Made public, since it may give pain
That cannot soon be cured again,
And one word may infix a stain

Which ten cannot gloss over,
Though speaking for his private part,
He is rejoiced with all his heart

Miss Knott missed not her lover.

AN ORIENTAL APOLOGUE.

AN ORIENTAL APOLOGUE.

I.

SOMEWHERE in India, upon a time,
(Read it not Injah, or you spoil the
verse,)

There dwelt two saints whose privilege sublime
It was to sit and watch the world grow
worse,
Their only care (in that delicious
clime)
At proper intervals to pray and curse ;
Pracrit the dialect each prudent
brother
Used for himself, Damnonian for the
other.

II.

One half the time of each was spent
in praying
Forblessing on his own unworthy head,
The other half in fearfully portraying
Where certain folks would go when
they were dead ;
This system of exchanges — there 's
no saying
To what more solid barter 't would have
led,
But that a river, vext with boils and
swellings
At rainy times, kept peace between
their dwellings.

III.

So they two played at wordy battle-
dore
And kept a curse forever in the air,
Flying this way or that from shore to
shore ;
No other labor did this holy pair,
Clothed and supported from the lav-
ish store
Which crowds lanigerois brought with
daily care ;

They toiled not neither did they spin ;
their bias
Was tow'rd the harder task of being
pious.

IV.

Each from his hut rushed six score
times a day,
Like a great canon of the Church full-
rammed
With cartridge theologic, (so to say,)
Touched himself off, and then, recoil-
ing, slammed
His hovel's door behind him in a way
That to his foe said plainly, — *you 'll*
be damned ;
And so like Potts and Wainwright,
shrill and strong
The two D—D'd each other all day
long.

V.

One was a dancing Dervise, a Mo-
ammedan,
The other was a Hindoo, a gymnoso-
phist ;
One kept his whatd'yecallit and his
Ramadan,
Laughing to scorn the sacred rites and
laws of his
Transfluvial rival, who, in turn, called
Ahmed an
Old top, and, asa clincher, shook across
a fist
With nails six inches long, yet lifted
not
His eyes from off his navel's mystic
knot.

VI.

“ Who whirls not round six thousand
times an hour
Will go,” screamed Ahmed. “ to the
evil place ;

May he eat dirt, and may the dog and
 Giaour
 Defile the graves of him and all his
 race ;
 Allah loves faithful souls and gives
 them power
 To spin till they are purple in the face ;
 Some folks get you know what, but
 he that pure is
 Earns Paradise and ninety thousand
 hours."

VII.

"Upon the silver mountain, South
 by East,
 Sits Brahma fed upon the sacred bean ;
 He loves those men whose nails are
 still increased,
 Who all their lives keep ugly, foul, and
 lean ;
 'T is of his grace that not a bird or
 beast
 Adorned with claws like mine was ever
 seen ;
 The suns and stars are Brahma's
 thoughts divine
 Even as these trees I seem to see are
 mine."

VIII.

"Thou seem'st to see, indeed !"
 roared Ahmed back ;
 "Were I but once across this plaguy
 stream,
 With a stout sapling in my hand, one
 whack
 On those lank ribs would rid thee of
 that Dream !
 Thy Brahma-blasphemy is ipecac
 To my soul's stomach ; couldst thou
 grasp the scheme
 Of true redemption, thou wouldst
 know that Deity
 Whirls by a kind of blessed sponta-
 neity.

IX.

"And this it is which keeps our earth
 here going
 With all the stars."—"O, vile ! but
 there's a place
 Prepared for such ; to think of Brahma
 throwing

Worlds like a juggler's balls up into
 Space !
 Why, not so much as a smooth lotos
 blowing
 Is e'er allowed that silence to efface
 Which broods around Brahma, and
 our earth, 't is known,
 Rests on a tortoise, moveless as this
 stone."

x.

So they kept up their banning am-
 bean,
 When suddenly came floating down the
 stream
 A youth whose face like an incarnate
 pæan
 Glowed, 't was so full of grandeur and
 of gleam ;
 "If there *be* gods, then, doubtless,
 this must be one,"
 Thought both at once, and then began
 to scream,
 "Surely, whate'er immortals know,
 thou knowest,
 Decide between us twain before thou
 goest !"

XI.

The youth was drifting in a slim ca-
 noe
 Most like a huge white waterlily's petal,
 But neither of our theologians knew
 Whereof 't was made ; whether of
 heavenly metal
 Unknown, or of a vast pearl split in
 two
 And hallowed, was a point they could
 not settle ;
 'T was good debate-seed, though,
 and bore large fruit
 In after years of many a tart dispute.

XII.

There were no wings upon the stran-
 ger's shoulders
 And yet he seemed so capable of rising
 That, had he soared like thistledown,
 beholders
 Had thought the circumstance noways
 surprising ;
 Enough that he remained, and, when
 the scolders

Hailed him as umpire in their vocal
prize-ring,
The painter of his boat he lightly
threw
Around a lotos-stem, and brought
her to.

XIII.

The strange youth had a look as if
he might
Have trod far planets where the atmos-
phere
(Of nobler temper) steeps the face
with light,
Just as our skins are tanned and freck-
led here ;
His air was that of a cosmopolite
In the wide universe from sphere to
sphere ;
Perhaps he was (his face had such
grave beauty)
An officer of Saturn's guards off duty.

XIV.

Both saints began to unfold their tales
at once,
Both wished their tales, like simial ones,
prehensile,
That they might seize his ear ; *fool !*
knave ! and dunce !
Flew zigzag back and forth, like strokes
of pencil
In a child's fingers ; voluble as duns,
They jabbered like the stones on that
immense hill
In the Arabian Nights ; until the
stranger
Began to think his ear-drums in some
danger.

XV.

In general those who nothing have to
say
Contrive to spend the longest time in
doing it ;
They turn and vary it in every way,
Hashing it, stewing it, mincing it, *ra-*
gouting it ;
Sometimes they keep it purposely at
bay,
Then let it slip to be again pursuing it ;
They drone it, groan it, whisper it
and shout it,

Refute it, flout it, swear to 't, prove
it, doubt it.

XVI.

Our saints had practised for some
thirty years ;
Their talk, beginning with a single stem,
Spread like a banyan, sending down
live piers,
Colonies of digression, and, in them,
Germs of yet new migrations ; once
by the ears,
They could convey damnation in a hem,
And blow the pinch of premise-prim-
ing off
Long syllogistic batteries, with a
cough.

XVII.

Each had a theory that the human
ear
A providential tunnel was, which led
To a huge vacuüm (and surely here
They showed some knowledge of the
general head),
For cant to be decanted through, a
mere
Auricular canal or raceway to be fed
All day and night, in sunshine and in
shower,
From their vast heads of milk-and-
water-power.

XVIII.

The present being a peculiar case,
Each with unwonted zeal the other
scouted,
Put his spurred hobby through its
every pace,
Pished, pshawed, poohed, horribled,
bahed, jeered, sneered, flouted,
Sniffed, nonsensed, infideled, fudged,
with his face
Looked scorn too nicely shaded to be
shouted,
And, with each inch of person and of
vesture,
Contrived to hint some most disdain-
ful gesture.

XIX.

At length, when their breath's end
was come about,

And both could, now and then, just
gasp "impostor!"

Holding their heads thrust menacingly
out,
As staggering cocks keep up their fighting
posture,

The stranger smiled and said, "Be-
yond a doubt
'T is fortunate, my friends, that you
have lost your
United parts of speech, or it had been
Impossible for me to get between.

XX.

"Produce! says Nature,—what have
you produced?

A new strait-waistcoat for the human
mind;

Are you not limbed, nerved, jointed,
arteried, juiced

As other men? yet, faithless to your
kind,

Rather like noxious insects you are
used

To puncture life's fair fruit, beneath
the rind

Laying your creed-eggs whence in
time there spring

Consumers new to eat and buzz and
sting.

XXI.

"Work! you have no conception
how 't will sweeten

Your views of Life and Nature, God
and Man;

Had you been forced to earn what
you have eaten,

Your heaven had shown a less dyspep-
tic plan;

At present your whole function is to
eat ten

And talk ten times as rapidly as you
can;

Were your shape true to cosmogonic
laws,

You would be nothing but a pair of
jaws.

XXII.

"Of all the useless beings in creation
The earth could spare most easily you
bakers

Of little clay gods, formed in shape
and fashion

Precisely in the image of their makers;
Why, it would almost move a saint

to passion,
To see these blind and deaf, the hourly
breakers

Of God's own image in their brother
men,

Set themselves up to tell the how,
where, when,

XXIII.

"Of God's existence; one's diges-
tion's worse—

So makes a god of vengeance and of
blood;

Another,—but no matter, they re-
verse

Creation's plan, out of their own vile
mud

Pat up a god, and burn, drown, hang,
or curse

Whoever worships not; each keeps his
stud

Of texts which wait with saddle on
and bridle

To hunt down atheists to their ugly
idol.

XXIV.

"This, I perceive, has been your oc-
cupation;

You should have been more usefully
employed;

All men are bound to earn their daily
ration,

Where States make not that primal
contract void

By cramps and limits; simple devas-
tation

Is the worm's task, and what he has
destroyed

His monument; creating is man's
work

And that, too, something more than
mist and murk."

XXV.

So having said, the youth was seen
no more,

And straightway our sage Brahmin, the
philosopher,

Cried, "That was aimed at thee, thou
endless bore,

Idle and useless as the growth of moss
over

A rotting tree-trunk!" "I would
square that score

Full soon," replied the Dervise, "could
I cross over

And catch thee by the beard. Thy
nails I'd trim

And make thee work, as was advised
by him."

XXVI.

"Work? Am I not at work from
morn till night

Sounding the deeps of oracles umbilical
Which for man's guidance never

come to light,

With all their various aptitudes, until
I call?"

"And I, do I not twirl from left to
right

For conscience' sake? Is that no work?
Thou silly gull,

He had thee in his eye; 't was Ga-
briel

Sent to reward my faith, I know him
well."

XXVII.

"'T was Vishnu, thou vile whirligig!"
and so

The good old quarrel was begun anew;
One would have sworn the sky was

black as sloe,

Had but the other dared to call it blue;
Nor were the followers who fed them

slow

To treat each other with their curses,
too,

Each hating t'other (moves it tears
or laughter?)

Because he thought him sure of hell
hereafter.

XXVIII.

At last some genius built a bridge of
boats

Over the stream, and Ahmed's zealots
filed

Across, upon a mission to (cut throats
and) spread religion pure and unde-
filed;

They sowed the propagandist's wild-
est oats,

Cutting off all, down to the smallest
child,

And came back, giving thanks for
such fat mercies,

To find their harvest gone past pray-
ers or curses.

XXIX.

All gone except their saint's religious
hops,

Which he kept up with more than com-
mon flourish;

But these, however satisfying crops
For the inner man, were not enough to

nourish

The body politic, which quickly drops
Reserve in such sad junctures, and

turns currish;

So Ahmed soon got cursed for all the
famine

Where'er the popular voice could
edge a damn in.

XXX.

At first he pledged a miracle quite
boldly,

And, for a day or two, they growled
and waited;

But, finding that this kind of manna
coldly

Sat on their stomachs, they ere long be-
rated

The saint for still persisting in that
old lie,

Till soon the whole machine of saint-
ship grated,

Ran slow, creaked, stopped, and,
wishing him in Tophet,

They gathered strength enough to
stone the prophet.

XXXI.

Some stronger ones contrived (by
eating leather,

Their weaker friends, and one thing or
another)

The winter months of scarcity to
weather;

Among these was the late saint's
younger brother,

Who, in the spring, collecting them
together,

Persuaded them that Ahmed's holy
 pother
 Had wrought in their behalf, and that
 the place
 Of Saint should be continued to his
 race.

XXXII.

Accordingly, 't was settled on the spot
 That Allah favored that peculiar breed ;

Beside, as all were satisfied, 't would
 not
 Be quite respectable to have the need
 Of public spiritual food forgot ;
 And so the tribe, with proper forms de-
 creed
 That he, and, failing him, his next
 of kin,
 Forever for the people's good should
 spin.

UNDER THE WILLOWS,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

UNDER THE WILLOWS.

TO CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

AGRO DOLCE.

THE wind is roistering out of doors,
My windows shake and my chimney
roars;
My Elmwood chimneys seem crooning
to me,
As of old, in their moody, minor key,
And out of the past the hoarse wind
blows,
As I sit in my arm-chair, and toast my
toes.

“Ho! ho! nine-and-forty,” they seem
to sing,
“We saw you a little toddling thing.
We knew you child and youth and man,
A wonderful fellow to dream and plan,
With a great thing always to come,—
who knows?
Well, well! 't is some comfort to toast
one's toes.

“How many times have you sat at gaze
Till the mouldering fire forgot to blaze,
Shaping among the whimsical coals
Fancies and figures and shining goals!
What matters the ashes that cover
those?
While hickory lasts you can toast your
toes.

“O dream-ship-builder! where are they
all,
Your grand three-deckers, deep-chested
and tall,
That should crush the waves under
canvas piles,
And anchor at last by the Fortunate
Isles?
There 's gray in your beard, the years
turn foes,

While you muse in your arm-chair and
toast your toes.”

I sit and dream that I hear, as of yore,
My Elmwood chimneys' deep-throated
roar;
If much be gone, there is much re-
mains;
By the embers of loss I count my
gains,
You and yours with the best, till the
old hope glows
In the fanciful flame, as I toast my toes.

Instead of a fleet of broad-browed
ships,
To send a child's armada of chips!
Instead of the great guns, tier on tier,
A freight of pebbles and grass-blades
sere!
“Well, maybe more love with the less
gift goes,”
I growl, as, half moody, I toast my toes.

UNDER THE WILLOWS.

FRANK-HEARTED hostess of the field
and wood,
Gypsy, whose roof is every spreading
tree,
June is the pearl of our New England
year.
Still a surprisal, though expected long,
Her coming startles. Long she lies in
wait,
Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws
coily back,
Then, from some southern ambush in
the sky,
With one great gush of blossom storms
the world.
A week ago the sparrow was divine:

The bluebird, shifting his light load of
song

From post to post along the cheerless
fence,

Was as a rhymèr ere the poet come ;
But now, O rapture ! sunshine winged
and voiced,

Pipe blown through by the warm wild
breath of the West

Shepherding his soft droves of fleecy
cloud,

Gladness of woods, skies, waters, all in
one,

The bobolink has come, and, like the
soul

Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,
Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what
Save *June ! Dear June ! Now God
be praised for June.*

May is a pious fraud of the almanac,
A ghastly parody of real Spring
Shaped out of snow and breathed with
eastern wind ;

Or if, o'er-confident, she trust the date,
And, with her handful of anemones,
Herself as shivery, steal into the sun,
The season need but turn his hourglass
round,

And Winter suddenly, like crazy Lear,
Reels back, and brings the dead May
in his arms,

Her budding breasts and wan dislusted
front

With frosty streaks and drifts of his
white beard

All overblown. Then, warmly walled
with books,

While my wood-fire supplies the sun's
defect,

Whispering old forest-sagas in its
dreams,

I take my May down from the happy
shelf

Where perch the world's rare song-
birds in a row,

Waiting my choice to open with full
breast,

And beg an alms of spring-time, ne'er
denied

In-doors by vernal Chaucer, whose
fresh woods

Throb thick with merle and mavis all
the year.

July breathes hot, sallows the crispy
fields,

Curls up the wan leaves of the lilac-
hedge,

And every eve cheats us with show of
clouds

That braze the horizon's western rim.
or hang

Motionless, with heaped canvas droop-
ing idly,

Like a dim fleet by starving men be-
sieged,

Conjectured half, and half descried
afar,

Helpless of wind, and seeming to slip
back

Adown the smooth curve of the oily
sea.

But June is full of invitations sweet,
Forth from the chimney's yawn and
thrice-read tomes

To leisurely delights and sauntering
thoughts

That brook no ceiling narrower than the
blue.

The cherry, drest for bridal, at my
pane

Brushes, then listens, *Will he come ?*
The bee,

All dusty as a miller, takes his toll
Of powdery gold, and grumbles. What

a day

To sun me and do nothing ! Nay, I
think

Merely to bask and ripen is sometimes
The student's wiser business ; the
brain

That forages all climes to line its cells,
Ranging both worlds on lightest wings

of wish,
Will not distil the juices it has sucked

To the sweet substance of pellucid
thought,

Except for him who hath the secret
learned

To mix his blood with sunshine, and to
take

The winds into his pulses. Hush !
'T is he !

My oriole, my glance of summer fire,
Is come at last, and, ever on the watch,

Twitches the pack-thread I had lightly
wound

About the bough to help his housekeep-
ing, —

Twitches and scouts by turns, blessing
his luck,

Yet fearing me who laid *it* in his way,
Nor, more than wiser we in our affairs,
Divines the providence that hides and
helps.

Heave, ho! Heave, ho! he whistles
as the twine

Slackens its hold; *once more, now!*
and a flash

Lightens across the sunlight to the
elm

Where his mate dangles at her cup of
felt.

Nor all his booty is the thread; he
trails

My loosened thought with it along the
air,

And I must follow, would I ever find
The inward rhyme to all this wealth of
life.

I care not how men trace their ances-
try,

To ape or Adam; let them please their
whim;

But I in June am midway to believe
A tree among my far progenitors,
Such sympathy is mine with all the
race,

Such mutual recognition vaguely sweet
There is between us. Surely there are
times

When they consent to own me of their
kin,

And condescend to me, and call me
cousin,

Murmuring faint lullabies of eldest
time,

Forgotten, and yet dumbly felt with
thrills

Moving the lips, though fruitless of the
words.

And I have many a lifelong leafy
friend,

Never estranged nor careful of my
soul,

That knows I hate the axe, and wel-
comes me

Within his tent as if I were a bird,
Or other free companion of the earth,

Yet undegenerate to the shifts of men.

Among them one, an ancient willow,
spreads

Eight balanced limbs, springing at once
all round

His deep-ridged trunk with upward
slant diverse,

In outline like enormous beaker, fit
For hand of Jotun, where 'mid snow
and mist

He holds unwieldly revel. This tree,
spared,

I know not by what grace, — for in the
blood

Of our New World subduers lingers yet
Hereditary feud with trees, they being
(They and the red-man most) our
fathers' foes, —

Is one of six, a willow Pleiades,
The seventh fallen, that lean along the
brink

Where the steep upland dips into the
marsh,

Their roots, like molten metal cooled
in flowing,

Stiffened in coils and runnels down the
bank.

The friend of all the winds, wide-armed
he towers

And glints his steely aglets in the sun,
Or whitens fitfully with sudden bloom
Of leaves breeze-lifted, much as when
a shoal

Of devious minnows wheel from where
a pike

Lurks balanced 'neath the lily-pads,
and whirl

A rood of silver bellies to the day.

Alas! no acorn from the British oak
'Neath which slim fairies tripping
wrought those rings

Of greenest emerald, wherewith fireside
life

Did with the invisible spirit of Nature
wed,

Was ever planted here! No darnel
fancy

Might choke one useful blade in Puri-
tan fields;

With horn and hoof the good old Devil
came,

The witch's broomstick was not contra-
band,

But all that superstition had of fair,

Or piety of native sweet, was doomed.
 And if there be who nurse unholy faiths,
 Fearing their god as if he were a wolf
 That snuffed round every home and was
 not seen,

There should be some to watch and
 keep alive

All beautiful beliefs. And such was
 that, —

By solitary shepherd first surmised.

Under Thessalian oaks, loved by some
 maid

Of royal stirp, that silent came and
 vanished,

As near her nest the hermit thrush, nor
 dared

Confess a mortal name, — that faith
 which gave

A Hamadryad to each tree; and I

Will hold it true that in this willow
 dwells

The open-handed spirit, frank and
 blithe,

Of ancient Hospitality, long since,
 With ceremonious thrift, bowed out of
 doors.

In June 't is good to lie beneath a tree
 While the blithe season comforts every
 sense,

Steeps all the brain in rest, and heals
 the heart,

Brimming it o'er with sweetness un-
 awares,

Fragrant and silent as that rosy snow
 Wherewith the pitying apple-tree fills up
 And tenderly lines some last-year rob-
 in's nest.

There muse I of old times, old hopes,
 old friends, —

Old friends! The writing of those
 words has borne

My fancy backward to the gracious past,
 The generous past, when all was pos-
 sible,

For all was then untried; the years be-
 tween

Have taught some sweet, some bitter
 lessons, none

Wiser than this, — to spend in all things
 else,

But of old friends to be most miserly.

Each year to ancient friendships adds
 a ring,

As to an oak, and precious more and
 more,

Without deservingness or help of ours,
 They grow, and, silent, wider spread,
 each year,

Their unbought ring of shelter or of
 shade.

Sacred to me the lichens on the bark,
 Which Nature's milliners would scrape
 away;

Most dear and sacred every withered
 limb!

'T is good to set them early, for our
 faith

Pines as we age, and, after wrinkles
 come,

Few plant, but water dead ones with
 vain tears.

This willow is as old to me as life;
 And under it full often have I stretched,
 Feeling the warm earth like a thing
 alive,

And gathering virtue in at every pore
 Till it possessed me wholly, and
 thought ceased,

Or was transfused in something to
 which thought

Is coarse and dull of sense. Myself
 was lost,

Gone from me like an ache, and what
 remained

Became a part of the universal joy.
 My soul went forth, and, mingling with

the tree,
 Danced in the leaves; or, floating in

the cloud,
 Saw its white double in the stream be-
 low;

Or else, sublimed to purer ecstasy,
 Dilated in the broad blue over all.

I was the wind that dappled the lush
 grass,

The tide that crept with coolness to its
 roots,

The thin-winged swallow skating on the
 air;

The life that gladdened everything was
 mine.

Was I then truly all that I beheld?
 Or is this stream of being but a glass

Where the mind sees its visionary self,
 As, when the kingfisher flits o'er his

bay,

Across the river's hollow heaven below
His picture flits, — another, yet the
same?

But suddenly the sound of human voice
Or footfall, like the drop a chemist
pours,

Doth in opacous cloud precipitate
The consciousness that seemed but now
dissolved

Into an essence rarer than its own,
And I am narrowed to myself once more.

For here not long is solitude secure,
Nor Fantasy left vacant to her spell.
Here, sometimes, in this paradise of
shade,

Rippled with western winds, the dusty
Tramp,

Seeing the treeless causey burn beyond,
Halts to unroll his bundle of strange
food

And munch an unearned meal. I can-
not help

Liking this creature, lavish Summer's
bedesman,

Who from the almshouse steals when
nights grow warm,

Himself his large estate and only charge,
To be the guest of haystack or of hedge,

Nobly superior to the household gear
That forfeits us our privilege of nature.

I bait him with my match-box and my
pouch,

Nor grudge the uncostly sympathy of
smoke,

His equal now, divinely unemployed.
Some smack of Robin Hood is in the
man,

Some secret league with wild wood-
wandering things;

He is our ragged Duke, our barefoot
Earl,

By right of birth exonerate from toil,
Who levies rent from us his tenants all,
And serves the state by merely being.

Here

The Scissors-grinder, pausing, doffs his
hat,

And lets the kind breeze, with its deli-
cate fan,

Winnow the heat from out his dank
gray hair, —

A grimy Ulysses, a much-wandered
man,

Whose feet are known to all the popu-
lous ways,

And many men and manners he hath
seen,

Not without fruit of solitary thought.
He, as the habit is of lonely men, —

Unused to try the temper of their mind
In fence with others, — positive and shy,

Yet knows to put an edge upon his
speech,

Pithily Saxon in unwilling talk.
Him I entrap with my long-suffering
knife,

And, while its poor blade hums away in
sparks,

Sharpen my wit upon his gritty mind,
In motion set obsequious to his wheel,

And in its quality not much unlike.

Nor wants my tree more punctual vis-
itors.

The children, they who are the only rich,
Creating for the moment, and possessing
Whate'er they choose to feign, — for
still with them

Kind Fancy plays the fairy godmother,
Strewing their lives with cheap material

For winged horses and Aladdin's lamps,
Pure elfin-gold, by manhood's touch
profane

To dead leaves disenchanted, — long
ago

Between the branches of the tree fixed
seats,

Making an o'erturned box their table.
Oft

The shrilling girls sit here between
school hours,

And play at *What's my thought like?*
while the boys,

With whom the age chivalric ever bides,
Pricked on by knightly spur of female
eyes,

Climb high to swing and shout on
perilous boughs,

Or, from the willow's armory equipped
With musket dumb, green banner,
edgeless sword,

Make good the rampart of their tree-
redoubt

'Gainst eager British storming from be-
low,

And keep alive the tale of Bunker's
Hill.

Here, too, the men that mend our vil-
lage ways,
Vexing McAdam's ghost with pounded
slate,
Their nooning take; much noisy talk
they spend
On horses and their ills; and, as John
Bull
Tells of Lord This or That, who was
his friend,
So these make boast of intimacies long
With famous teams, and add large esti-
mates,
By competition swelled from mouth to
mouth,
Of how much they could draw, till one,
ill pleased
To have his legend overbid, retorts:
"You take and stretch truck-horses in
a string
From here to Long Wharf end, one
thing I know,
Not heavy neither, they could never
draw, —
Ensign's long bow!" Then laughter
loud and long.
So they in their leaf-shadowed micro-
cosm
Image the larger world; for wheresoe'er
Ten men are gathered, the observant
eye
Will find mankind in little, as the stars
Glide up and set, and all the heavens
revolve
In the small welkin of a drop of dew.

I love to enter pleasure by a postern,
Not the broad popular gate that gulps
the mob;
To find my theatres in roadside nooks,
Where men are actors, and suspect it
not;
Where Nature all unconscious works
her will,
And every passion moves with human
gait,
Unhampered by the buskin or the train.
Hating the crowd, where we gregarious
inen
Lead lonely lives, I love society,
Nor seldom find the best with simple
souls
Unswerved by culture from their native
bent,

The ground we meet on being primal
man
And nearer the deep bases of our lives.

But O, half heavenly, earthly half, my
soul,
Canst thou from those late ecstasies
descend,
Thy lips still wet with the miraculous
wine
That transubstantiates all thy baser
stuff
To such divinity that soul and sense,
Once more commingled in their source,
are lost, —
Canst thou descend to quench a vulgar
thirst
With the mere dregs and risings of
the world?
Well, if my nature find her pleasure so,
I am content, nor need to blush; I take
My little gift of being clean from God,
Not haggling for a better, holding it
Good as was ever any in the world,
My days as good and full of miracle.
I pluck my nutriment from any bush,
Finding out poison as the first men did
By tasting and then suffering, if I must.
Sometimes my bush burns, and some-
times it is
A leafless wilding shivering by the wall;
But I have known when winter barberries
Pricked the effeminate palate with sur-
prise
Of savor whose mere harshness seemed
divine.

O, benediction of the higher mood
And human-kindness of the lower! for
both
I will be grateful while I live, nor ques-
tion
The wisdom that hath made us what
we are,
With such large range as from the ale-
house bench
Can reach the stars and be with both at
home.
They tell us we have fallen on prosy
days,
Condemned to glean the leavings of
earth's feast
Where gods and heroes took delight of
old;

But though our lives, moving in one
 dull round
 Of repetition infinite, become
 Stale as a newspaper once read, and
 though
 History herself, seen in her workshop,
 seem
 To have lost the art that dyed those
 glorious panes,
 Rich with memorial shapes of saint and
 sage,
 That pave with splendor the Past's
 dusky aisles, —
 Panes that enchant the light of common
 day
 With colors costly as the blood of kings,
 Until it edge our thought with hues
 ideal, —
 Yet while the world is left, while nature
 lasts
 And man the best of nature, there shall
 be
 Somewhere contentment for these hu-
 man hearts,
 Some freshness, some unused material
 For wonder and for song. I lose my-
 self
 In other ways where solemn guide-
 posts say,
This way to Knowledge, This way to
Repose,
 But here, here only, I am ne'er be-
 trayed,
 For every by-path leads me to my love.

God's passionless reformers, influences,
 That purify and heal and are not seen,
 Shall man say whence your virtue is,
 or how
 Ye make medicinal the wayside weed?
 I know that sunshine, through what-
 ever rift
 How shaped it matters not, upon my
 walls
 Paints discs as perfect-rounded as its
 source,
 And, like its antitype, the ray divine,
 However finding entrance, perfect still,
 Repeats the image unimpaired of God.

We, who by shipwreck only find the
 shores
 Of divine wisdom, can but kneel at
 first;

Can but exult to feel beneath our feet,
 That long stretched vainly down the
 yielding deeps,
 The shock and sustenance of solid earth;
 Inland afar we see what temples gleam
 Through immemorial stems of sacred
 groves,
 And we conjecture shining shapes
 therein;
 Yet for a space we love to wonder here
 Among the shells and sea-weed of the
 beach.

So mused I once within my willow-tent
 One brave June morning, when the
 bluff northwest,
 Thrusting aside a dank and snuffling
 day
 That made us bitter at our neighbors'
 sins,
 Brimmed the great cup of heaven with
 sparkling cheer
 And roared a lusty stave; the sliding
 Charles,
 Blue toward the west, and bluer and
 more blue,
 Living and lustrous as a woman's
 eyes
 Look once and look no more, with
 southward curve
 Ran crinkling sunniness, like Helen's
 hair
 Glimpsed in Elysium, insubstantial
 gold;
 From blossom-clouded orchards, far
 away
 The bobolink tinkled; the deep mead-
 ows flowed
 With multitudinous pulse of light and
 shade
 Against the bases of the southern
 hills,
 While here and there a drowsy island
 rick
 Slept and its shadow slept; the wood-
 en bridge
 Thundered, and then was silent; on
 the roofs
 The sun-warped shingles rippled with
 the heat;
 Summer on field and hill, in heart and
 brain,
 All life washed clean in this high tide
 of June.

DARA.

WHEN Persia's sceptre trembled in a
hand
Wilted with harem-heats, and all the
land
Was hovered over by those vulture ills
That snuff decaying empire from afar,
Then, with a nature balanced as a star,
Dara arose, a shepherd of the hills.

He who had governed fleecy subjects
well
Made his own village by the selfsame
spell
Secure and quiet as a guarded fold ;
Then, gathering strength by slow and
wise degrees
Under his sway, to neighbor villages
Order returned, and faith and justice
old.

Now when it fortun'd that a king more
wise
Endued the realm with brain and hands
and eyes,
He sought on every side men brave
and just ;
And having heard our mountain shep-
herd's praise,
How he refilled the mould of elder
days,
To Dara gave a satrapy in trust.

So Dara shepherded a province wide,
Nor in his viceroy's sceptre took more
pride
Than in his crook before ; but envy
finds
More food in cities than on mountains
bare ;
And the frank sun of natures clear and
rare
Breeds poisonous fogs in low and mar-
ish minds.

Soon it was hissed into the royal ear,
That, though wise Dara's province, year
by year,
Like a great sponge, sucked wealth and
plenty up,
Yet, when he squeezed it at the king's
behest,

Some yellow drops, more rich than all
the rest.
Went to the filling of his private cup.

For proof, they said, that, wheresoe'er
he went,
A chest, beneath whose weight the
camel bent,
Went with him ; and no mortal eye had
seen
What was therein, save only Dara's
own ;
But, when 't was opened, all his tent
was known
To glow and lighten with heaped jewels'
sheen.

The King set forth for Dara's province
straight ;
There, as was fit, outside the city's
gate,
The viceroy met him with a stately
train,
And there, with archers circled, close
at hand,
A camel with the chest was seen to
stand :
The King's brow reddened, for the guilt
was plain.

"Open me here," he cried, "this
treasure-chest !"
'T was done ; and only a worn shep-
herd's vest
Was found therein. Some blushed and
hung the head ;
Not Dara ; open as the sky's blue roof
He stood, and "O my lord, behold the
proof
That I was faithful to my trust," he
said.

"To govern men, lo all the spell I had !
My soul in these rude vestments ever
clad
Still to the unstained past kept true and
leal,
Still on these plains could breathe her
mountain air,
And fortune's heaviest gifts serenely
bear,
Which bend men from their truth and
make them reel.

“For ruling wisely I should have small skill,
Were I not lord of simple Dara still;
That sceptre kept, I could not lose my way.”
Strange dew in royal eyes grew round
and bright,
And strained the throbbing lids; be-
fore 't was night
Two added provinces blest Dara's
sway.

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL.

THE SNOW had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails were softened to swan's-
down,
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, “Father, who makes it
snow?”
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so
high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
“The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!”

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed
her;
And she, kissing back, could not
know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.

THE SINGING LEAVES.

A BALLAD.

I.

“WHAT fairings will ye that I bring?”
Said the King to his daughters three;
“For I to Vanity Fair am boun,
Now say what shall they be?”

Then up and spake the eldest daughter,
That lady tall and grand:
“O, bring me pearls and diamonds
great,
And gold rings for my hand.”

Thereafter spake the second daughter,
That was both white and red:
“For me bring silks that will stand
alone,
And a gold comb for my head.”

Then came the turn of the least daugh-
ter,
That was whiter than thistle-down,
And among the gold of her blithesome
hair
Dim shone the golden crown.

“There came a bird this morning,
And sang 'neath my bower eaves,
Till I dreamed, as his music made me,
'Ask thou for the Singing Leaves.'”

Then the brow of the King swelled
crimson

With a flush of angry scorn :
"Well have ye spoken, my two eldest,
And chosen as ye were born ;

"But she like a thing of peasant race,
That is happy binding the sheaves" ;
Then he saw her dead mother in her
face,
And said, "Thou shalt have thy
leaves."

II.

He mounted and rode three days and
nights
Till he came to Vanity Fair,
And 't was easy to buy the gems and
the silk,
But no Singing Leaves were there.

Then deep in the greenwood rode he,
And asked of every tree,
"O, if you have ever a Singing Leaf,
I pray you give it me !"

But the trees all kept their counsel,
And never a word said they,
Only there sighed from the pine-tops
A music of seas far away.

Only the pattering aspen
Made a sound of growing rain,
That fell ever faster and faster,
Then faltered to silence again.

"O, where shall I find a little foot-page
That would win both hose and shoon,
And will bring to me the Singing Leaves
If they grow under the moon?"

Then lightly turned him Walter the
page,
By the stirrup as he ran :
"Now pledge ye me the truesome word
Of a king and gentleman,

"That you will give me the first, first
thing
You meet at your castle-gate,
And the Princess shall get the Singing
Leaves,
Or mine be a traitor's fate."

The King's head dropt upon his breast
A moment, as it might be ;
'T will be my dog, he thought, and said,
"My faith I plight to thee."

Then Walter took from next his heart
A packet small and thin,
"Now give you this to the Princess
Anne,
The Singing Leaves are therein."

III.

As the King rode in at his castle-gate,
A maiden to meet him ran,
And "Welcome, father !" she laughed
and cried
Together, the Princess Anne.

"Lo, here the Singing Leaves," quoth
he,
"And woe, but they cost me dear !"
She took the packet, and the smile
Deepened down beneath the tear.

It deepened down till it reached her
heart,
And then gushed up again,
And lighted her tears as the sudden sun
Transfigures the summer rain.

And the first Leaf, when it was opened,
Sang : "I am Walter the page,
And the songs I sing 'neath thy window
Are my only heritage."

And the second Leaf sang : "But in
the land
That is neither on earth or sea,
My lute and I are lords of more
Than thrice this kingdom's fee."

And the third Leaf sang, "Be mine !
Be mine !"
And ever it sang, "Be mine !"
Then sweeter it sang and ever sweeter,
And said, "I am thine, thine, thine !"

At the first Leaf she grew pale enough,
At the second she turned aside,
At the third, 't was as if a lily flushed
With a rose's red heart's tide.

"Good counsel gave the bird," said she,
"I have my hope thrice o'er,

For they sing to my very heart," she
said,
"And it sings to them evermore."

She brought to him her beauty and
truth,
But and broad earldoms three,
And he made her queen of the broader
lands
He held of his lute in fee.

SEA-WEED.

Nor always unimpeded can I pray,
Nor, pitying saint, thine intercession
claim ;
Too closely clings the burden of the
day,
And all the mint and anise that I pay
But swells my debt and deepens my
self-blame.

Shall I less patience have than Thou,
who know
That Thou revisit'st all who wait for
thee,
Nor only fill'st the unsounded deeps
below,
But dost refresh with punctual overflow
The rifts where unregarded mosses be ?

The drooping sea-weed hears, in night
abyssed,
Far and more far the wave's receding
shocks,
Nor doubts, for all the darkness and
the mist,
That the pale shepherdess will keep her
tryst,
And shoreward lead again her foam-
fleeced flocks.

For the same wave that rims the Carib
shore
With momentary brede of pearl and
gold,
Goes hurrying thence to gladden with
its roar
Lorn weeds bound fast on rocks of Lab-
rador,
By love divine on one sweet errand
rolled.

And, though Thy healing waters far
withdraw,
I, too, can wait and feed on hope of
Thee
And of the dear recurrence of Thy law
Sure that the parting grace that morn-
ing saw
Abides its time to come in search of me.

THE FINDING OF THE LYRE.

THERE lay upon the ocean's shore
What once a tortoise served to cover.
A year and more, with rush and roar,
The surf had rolled it over,
Had played with it, and flung it by,
As wind and weather might decide it,
Then tossed it high where sand-drifts
dry
Cheap burial might provide it.

It rested there to bleach or tan,
The rains had soaked, the suns had
burned it ;
With many a ban the fisherman
Had stumbled o'er and spurned it ;
And there the fisher-girl would stay,
Conjecturing with her brother
How in their play the poor estray
Might serve some use or other.

So there it lay, through wet and dry,
As empty as the last new sonnet,
Till by and by came Mercury,
And, having mused upon it,
" Why, here," cried he, " the thing of
things
In shape, material, and dimension !
Give it but strings, and, lo, it sings,
A wonderful invention !"

So said, so done ; the chords he strained,
And, as his fingers o'er them hovered,
The shell disdained a soul had gained,
The lyre had been discovered.
O empty world that round us lies,
Dead shell, of soul and thought for-
saken,
Brought we but eyes like Mercury's,
In thee what songs should waken !

NEW YEAR'S EVE. 1850.

THIS is the midnight of the century, —
hark!

Through aisle and arch of Godminster
have gone

T'welve throbs that tolled the zenith of
the dark,

And mornward now the starry hands
move on;

“Mornward!” the angelic watchers
say,

“Passed is the sorest trial;

No plot of man can stay

The hand upon the dial;

Night is the dark stem of the lily Day.”

If we, who watched in valleys here be-
low,

Toward streaks, misdeemed of morn,
our faces turned

When volcan glares set all the east
aglow, —

We are not poorer that we wept and
yearned;

Though earth swing wide from God's
intent,

And though no man nor nation

Will move with full consent

In heavenly gravitation,

Yet by one Sun is every orbit bent.

 FOR AN AUTOGRAPH.

THOUGH old the thought and oft ex-
prest,

'T is his at last who says it best, —

I'll try my fortune with the rest.

Life is a leaf of paper white

Whereon each one of us may write

His word or two, and then comes night.

“Lo, time and space enough,” we cry,

“To write an epic!” so we try

Our nibs upon the edge, and die.

Muse not which way the pen to hold,

Luck hates the slow and loves the bold,

Soon come the darkness and the cold.

Greatly begin! though thou have time
But for a line, be that sublime, —
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.

Ah, with what lofty hope we came!
But we forget it, dream of fame,
And scrawl, as I do here, a name.

 AL FRESCO.

THE dandelions and buttercups
Gild all the lawr: the drowsy bee
Stumbles among the clover-tops,
And summer sweetens all but me:

Away, unfruitful lore of books,

For whose vain idiom we reject

The soul's more native dialect,

Aliens among the birds and brooks,

Dull to interpret or conceive

What gospels lost the woods retrieve!

Away, ye critics, city-bred,

Who set man-traps of thus and so,

And in the first man's footsteps tread,

Like those who toil through drifted
snow!

Away, my poets, whose sweet spell

Can make a garden of a cell!

I need ye not, for I to-day

Will make one long sweet verse of play.

Snap, chord of manhood's tenser
strain!

To-day I will be a boy again;

The mind's pursuing element,

Like a bow slackened and unbent,

In some dark corner shall be leant.

The robin sings, as of old, from the
limb!

The cat-bird croons in the lilac-bush!

Through the dim arbor, himself more
dim,

Silently hops the hermit-thrush,

The withered leaves keep dumb for him;

The irreverent buccaneering bee

Hath stormed and rifled the nunnery

Of the lily, and scattered the sacred floor

With haste-dropt gold from shrine to
door;

There, as of yore,

The rich, milk-tingeing buttercup

Its tiny polished urn holds up,

Filled with ripe summer to the edge,

The sun in his own wine to pledge;
 And our tall elm, this hundredth year
 Doge of our leafy Venice here,
 Who, with an annual ring, doth wed
 The blue Adriatic overhead,
 Shadows with his palatial mass
 The deep canals of flowing grass.

O unestranged birds and bees!
 O face of nature always true!
 O never-unsympathizing trees!
 O never-rejecting roof of blue,
 Whose rash disherison never falls
 On us unthinking prodigals,
 Yet who convictest all our ill,
 So grand and unappeasable!
 Methinks my heart from each of these
 Plucks part of childhood back again,
 Long there imprisoned, as the breeze
 Doth every hidden odor seize
 Of wood and water, hill and plain.
 Once more am I admitted peer
 In the upper house of Nature here,
 And feel through all my pulses run
 The royal blood of breeze and sun.

Upon these elm-arched solitudes
 No hum of neighbor toil intrudes;
 The only hammer that I hear
 Is wielded by the woodpecker,
 The single noisy calling his
 In all our leaf-hid Sybaris;
 The good old time, close-hidden here,
 Persists, a loyal cavalier,
 While Roundheads prim, with point of
 fox,
 Probe wainscot-chink and empty box;
 Here no hoarse-voiced iconoclast
 Insults thy statues, royal Past;
 Myself too prone the axe to wield,
 I touch the silver side of the shield
 With lance reversed, and challenge
 peace,
 A willing convert of the trees.

How chanced it that so long I tost
 A cable's length from this rich coast,
 With foolish anchors hugging close
 The beckoning weeds and lazy ooze,
 Nor had the wit to wreck before
 On this enchanted island's shore,
 Whither the current of the sea,
 With wiser drift, persuaded me?

O, might we but of such rare days
 Build up the spirit's dwelling-place!
 A temple of so Parian stone
 Would brook a marble god alone,
 The statue of a perfect life,
 Far-shrined from earth's bestaining
 strife,

Alas! though such felicity
 In our vext world here may not be,
 Yet, as sometimes the peasant's hut
 Shows stones which old religion cut
 With text inspired, or mystic sign
 Of the Eternal and Divine,
 Torn from the consecration deep
 Of some fallen nunnery's mossy sleep,
 So, from the ruins of this day
 Crumbling in golden dust away,
 The soul one gracious block may draw,
 Carved with some fragment of the law,
 Which, set in life's uneven wall,
 Old benedictions may recall,
 And lure some nunlike thoughts to take
 Their dwelling here for memory's sake.

MASACCIO.

(IN THE BRANCACCI CHAPEL.)

HE came to Florence long ago,
 And painted here these walls, that shone
 For Raphael and for Angelo,
 With secrets deeper than his own,
 Then shrank into the dark again,
 And died, we know not how or when.

The shadows deepened, and I turned
 Half sadly from the fresco grand;
 "And is this," mused I, "all ye earned,
 High-vaulted brain and cunning hand,
 That ye to greater men could teach
 The skill yourselves could never
 reach?"

"And who were they," I mused, "that
 wrought
 Through pathless wilds, with labor long,
 The highways of our daily thought?
 Who reared those towers of earliest
 song
 That lift us from the throng to peace
 Remote in sunny silences?"

Out clanged the Ave Mary bells,
 And to my heart this message came :
 Each clamorous throat among them tells
 What strong-souled martyrs died in
 flame

To make it possible that thou
 Shouldst here with brother sinners bow.

Thoughts that great hearts once broke
 for, we

Breathe cheaply in the common air ;
 The dust we trample heedlessly
 Throbb'd once in saints and heroes
 rare,

Who perished, opening for their race
 New pathways to the commonplace.

Henceforth, when rings the health to
 those

Who live in story and in song,
 O nameless dead, who now repose
 Safe in Oblivion's chambers strong,
 One cup of recognition true
 Shall silently be drained to you !

WITHOUT AND WITHIN.

My coachman, in the moonlight there,
 Looks through the side-light of the
 door ;

I hear him with his brethren swear,
 As I could do, — but only more.

Flattening his nose against the pane,
 He envies me my brilliant lot,
 Breathes on his aching fists in vain,
 And dooms me to a place more hot.

He sees me in to supper go,
 A silken wonder by my side,
 Bare arms, bare shoulders, and a row
 Of flounces, for the door too wide.

He thinks how happy is my arm
 'Neath its white-gloved and jewelled
 load ;

And wishes me some dreadful harm,
 Hearing the merry corks explode.

Meanwhile I inly curse the bore
 Of hunting still the same old coon,
 And envy him, outside the door,
 In golden quiets of the moon.

The winter wind is not so cold
 As the bright smile he sees me win,
 Nor the host's oldest wine so old
 As our poor gabble sour and thin.

I envy him the ungyved prance
 By which his freezing feet he warms,
 And drag my lady's-chains and dance
 The galley-slave of dreary forms.

O, could he have my share of din,
 And I his quiet ! — past a doubt
 'T would still be one man bored within,
 And just another bored without.

GODMINSTER CHIMES.

WRITTEN IN AID OF A CHIME OF BELLS
 FOR CHRIST CHURCH, CAMBRIDGE.

GODMINSTER? Is it Fancy's play?
 I know not, but the word
 Sings in my heart, nor can I say
 Whether 't was dreamed or heard ;
 Yet fragrant in my mind it clings
 As blossoms after rain,
 And builds of half-remembered things
 This vision in my brain.

Through aisles of long-drawn centuries
 My spirit walks in thought,
 And to that symbol lifts its eyes
 Which God's own pity wrought ;
 From Calvary shines the altar's gleam,
 The Church's East is there,
 The Ages one great minster seem,
 That throbs with praise and prayer.

And all the way from Calvary down
 The carven pavement shows
 Their graves who won the martyr's
 crown

And safe in God repose ;
 The saints of many a warring creed
 Who now in heaven have learned
 That all paths to the Father lead
 Where Self the feet have spurned.

And, as the mystic aisles I pace,
 By aureoled workmen built,
 Lives ending at the Cross I trace
 Alike through grace and guilt ;

One Mary bathes the blessed feet
 With ointment from her eyes,
 With spikenard one, and both are sweet,
 For both are sacrifice.

Moravian hymn and Roman chant
 In one devotion blend,
 To speak the soul's eternal want
 Of Him, the inmost friend ;
 One prayer soars cleansed with martyr
 fire,
 One choked with sinner's tears,
 In heaven both meet in one desire,
 And God one music hears.

Whilst thus I dream, the bells clash out
 Upon the Sabbath air,
 Each seems a hostile faith to shout,
 A selfish form of prayer ;
 My dream is shattered, yet who knows
 But in that heaven so near
 These discords find harmonious close
 In God's atoning ear ?

O chime of sweet Saint Charity,
 Peal soon that Easter morn
 When Christ for all shall risen be,
 And in all hearts new-born !
 That Pentecost when utterance clear
 To all men shall be given,
 When all shall say *My Brother* here,
 And hear *My Son* in heaven !

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

Who hath not been a poet ? Who hath
 not,
 With life's new quiver full of winged
 years,
 Shot at a venture, and then, following
 on,
 Stood doubtful at the Parting of the
 Ways ?

There once I stood in dream, and as I
 paused,
 Looking this way and that, came forth
 to me
 The figure of a woman veiled, that said,
 "My name is Duty, turn and follow
 me" ;
 Something there was that chilled me in
 her voice ;

I felt Youth's hand grow slack and cold
 in mine,
 As if to be withdrawn, and I replied :
 "O, leave the hot wild heart within my
 breast !

Duty comes soon enough, too soon
 comes Death ;
 This slippery globe of life whirls of it-
 self,
 Hasting our youth away into the dark ;
 These senses, quivering with electric
 heats,
 Too soon will show, like nests on win-
 try boughs
 Obtrusive emptiness, too palpable
 wreck,
 Which whistling northwinds line with
 downy snow
 Sometimes, or fringe with foliated
 rime, in vain,
 Thither the singing birds no more re-
 turn."

Then glowed to me a maiden from the
 left,
 With bosom half disclosed, and naked
 arms
 More white and undulant than necks
 of swans ;
 And all before her steps an influence ran
 Warm as the whispering South that
 opens buds
 And swells the laggard sails of North-
 ern May.

"I am called Pleasure, come with me !"
 she said,
 Then laughed, and shook out sunshine
 from her hair,
 Not only that, but, so it seemed, shook
 out
 All memory too, and all the moonlit
 past,
 Old loves, old aspirations, and old
 dreams,
 More beautiful for being old and gone.

So we two went together ; downward
 sloped
 The path through yellow meads, or so
 I dreamed,
 Yellow with sunshine and young green,
 but I
 Saw naught nor heard, shut up in one
 close joy ;

I only felt the hand within my own,
Transmuting all my blood to golden fire,
Dissolving all my brain in throbbing
mist.

Suddenly shrank the hand; suddenly
burst

A cry that split the torpor of my brain,
And as the first sharp thrust of light-
ning loosens

From the heaped cloud its rain, loos-
ened my sense :

"Save me!" it thrilled; "O, hide me!
there is Death!

Death the divider, the unmerciful,
That digs his pitfalls under Love and
Youth

And covers Beauty up in the cold
ground;

Horrible Death! bringer of endless
dark;

Let him not see me! hide me in thy
breast!"

Thereat I strove to clasp her, but my
arms

Met only what slipped crumbling down,
and fell,

A handful of gray ashes, at my feet.

I would have fled, I would have fol-
lowed back

That pleasant path we came, but all
was changed;

Rocky the way, abrupt, and hard to find;
Yet I toiled on, and, toiling on, I

thought,
"That way lies Youth, and Wisdom,
and all Good;

For only by unlearning Wisdom comes
And climbing backward to diviner
Youth;

What the world teaches profits to the
world,

What the soul teaches profits to the
soul,

Which then first stands erect with God-
ward face,

When she lets fall her pack of withered
facts,

The gleanings of the outward eye and
ear,

And looks and listens with her finer
sense;

Nor Truth nor Knowledge cometh
from without."

After long weary days I stood again
And waited at the Parting of the Ways;
Again the figure of a woman veiled
Stood forth and beckoned, and I fol-
lowed now :

Down to no bower of roses led the path
But through the streets of towns where
chattering Cold

Hewed wood for fires whose glow was
owned and fenced,

Where Nakedness wove garments of
warm wool

Not for itself;—or through the fields
it led

Where Hunger reaped the unattain-
able grain,

Where Idleness enforced saw idle lands,
Leagues of unpeopled soil, the common
earth,

Walled round with paper against God
and Man.

"I cannot look," I groaned, "at only
these;

The heart grows hardened with perpet-
ual woe,

And palters with a feigned necessity,
Bargaining with itself to be content;

Let me behold thy face."

The Form replied :

"Men follow Duty, never overtake;
Duty nor lifts her veil nor looks be-
hind."

But, as she spake, a loosened lock of
hair

Slipped from beneath her hood, and I,
who looked

To see it gray and thin, saw amplest
gold;

Not that dull metal dug from sordid
earth,

But such as the retiring sunset flood
Leaves heaped on bays and capes of
island cloud.

"O Guide divine," I prayed, "although
not yet

I may repair the virtue which I feel
Gone out at touch of untuned things
and foul

With draughts of Beauty, yet declare
how soon!"

"Faithless and faint of heart," the
voice returned,

"Thou see'st no beauty save thou make
it first;

Man, Woman, Nature, each is but a
 glass
 Where the soul sees the image of her-
 self,
 Visible echoes, offsprings of herself.
 But, since thou need'st assurance of how
 soon,
 Wait till that angel comes who opens
 all,
 The reconciler, he who lifts the veil,
 The reuniter, the rest-bringer, Death."

I waited, and methought he came ; but
 how,
 Or in what shape, I doubted, for no
 sign,
 By touch or mark, he gave me as he
 passed :
 Only I know a lily that I held
 Snapt short below the head and shriv-
 elled up ;
 Then turned my Guide and looked at
 me unveiled,
 And I beheld no face of matron stern,
 But that enchantment I had followed
 erst,
 Only more fair, more clear to eye and
 brain,
 Heightened and chastened by a house-
 hold charm ;
 She smiled, and " Which is fairer," said
 her eyes,
 " The hag's unreal Florimel or mine ?"

ALADDIN.

WHEN I was a beggarly boy,
 And lived in a cellar damp,
 I had not a friend nor a toy,
 But I had Aladdin's lamp ;
 When I could not sleep for cold,
 I had fire enough in my brain,
 And builded, with roofs of gold,
 My beautiful castles in Spain !

Since then I have toiled day and night,
 I have money and power good store,
 But I'd give all my lamps of silver
 bright,
 For the one that is mine no more ;
 Take, Fortune, whatever you choose,
 You gave, and may snatch again ;

I have nothing 't would pain me to lose,
 For I own no more castles in Spain !

AN INVITATION.

NINE years have slipt like hour-glass
 sand
 From life's still-emptying globe away,
 Since last, dear friend, I clasped your
 hand,
 And stood upon the impoverished land,
 Watching the steamer down the bay.

I held the token which you gave,
 While slowly the smoke-pennon curled
 O'er the vague rim 'tween sky and wave,
 And shut the distance like a grave,
 Leaving me in the colder world.

The old worn world of hurry and heat,
 The young, fresh world of thought and
 scope,
 While you, where beckoning billows
 fleet
 Climb far sky-beaches still and sweet,
 Sank wavering down the ocean-slope.

You sought the new world in the old,
 I found the old world in the new,
 All that our human hearts can hold,
 The inward world of deathless mould,
 The same that Father Adam knew.

He needs no ship to cross the tide,
 Who, in the lives about him, sees
 Fair window-prospects opening wide
 O'er history's fields on every side,
 To Ind and Egypt, Rome and Greece.

Whatever moulds of various brain
 E'er shaped the world to weal or woe,
 Whatever empires' wax and wane,
 To him that hath not eyes in vain,
 Our village-microcosm can show.

Come back our ancient walks to tread,
 Dear haunts of lost or scattered friends,
 Old Harvard's scholar-factories red,
 Where song and smoke and laughter
 sped
 The nights to proctor-haunted ends.

Constant are all our former loves,
 Unchanged the icehouse-girdled pond,
 Its hemlock glooms, its shadowy coves,
 Where floats the coot and never moves,
 Its slopes of long-tamed green beyond.

Our old familiars are not laid,
 Though snapt our wands and sunk our
 books ;
 They beckon, not to be gainsaid,
 Where, round broad meads that mowers
 wade,
 The Charles his steel-blue sickle crooks.

Where, as the cloudbergs eastward
 blow,
 From glow to gloom the hillsides shift
 Their plumps of orchard trees arow,
 Their lakes of rye that wave and flow,
 Their snowy whiteweed's summer drift.

There have we watched the West un-
 furl
 A cloud Byzantium newly born,
 With flickering spires and domes of
 pearl,
 And vapory surfs that crowd and curl
 Into the sunset's Golden Horn.

There, as the flaming occident
 Burned slowly down to ashes gray,
 Night pitched o'erhead her silent tent,
 And glimmering gold from Hesper
 sprept
 Upon the darkened river lay,

Where a twin sky but just before
 Deepened, and double swallows
 skimmed,
 And, from a visionary shore,
 Hung visioned trees, that, more and
 more
 Grew dusk as those above were dimmed.

Then eastward saw we slowly grow
 Clear-edged the lines of roof and spire,
 While great elm-masses blacken slow,
 And linden-ricks their round heads
 show
 Against a flush of widening fire.

Doubtful at first and far away,
 The moon-flood creeps more wide and
 wide ;

Up a ridged beach of cloudy gray,
 Curved round the east as round a bay,
 It slips and spreads its gradual tide.

Then suddenly, in lurid mood,
 The moon looms large o'er town and
 field

As upon Adam, red like blood,
 'Tween him and Eden's happy wood,
 Glared the commissioned angel's shield.

Or let us seek the seaside, there
 To wander idly as we list,
 Whether, on rocky headlands bare,
 Sharp cedar-horns, like breakers, tear
 The trailing fringes of gray mist,

Or whether, under skies full flown,
 The brightening surfs, with foamy din,
 Their breeze-caught forelocks backward
 blown,

Against the beach's yellow zone,
 Curl slow, and plunge forever in.

And, as we watch those canvas towers
 That lean along the horizon's rim,
 "Sail on," I'll say ; " may sunniest
 hours

Convoy you from this land of ours,
 Since from my side you bear not him ! "

For years thrice three, wise Horace
 said,

A poem rare let silence bind ;
 And love may ripen in the shade,
 Like ours, for nine long seasons laid
 In deepest arches of the mind.

Come back ! Not ours the Old World's
 good,

The Old World's ill, thank God, not
 ours ;

But here, far better understood,
 The days enforce our native mood,
 And challenge all our manlier powers.

Kindlier to me the place of birth
 That first my tottering footsteps trod ;
 There may be fairer spots of earth,
 But all their glories are not worth
 The virtue of the native sod.

Thence climbs an influence more benign
 Through pulse and nerve, through heart
 and brain ;

Sacred to me those fibres fine
That first clasped earth. O, ne'er be
mine
The alien sun and alien rain !

These nourish not like homelier glows
Or waterings of familiar skies,
And nature fairer blooms bestows
On the heaped hush of wintry snows,
In pastures dear to childhood's eyes,

Than where Italian earth receives
The partial sunshine's ampler boons,
Where vines carve friezes 'neath the
eaves,
And, in dark firmaments of leaves,
The orange lifts its golden moons.

THE NOMADES.

WHAT Nature makes in any mood
To me is warranted for good,
Though long before I learned to see
She did not set us moral theses,
And scorned to have her sweet caprices
Strait-waistcoated in you or me.

I, who take root and firmly cling,
Thought fixedness the only thing ;
Why Nature made the butterflies,
(Those dreams of wings that float and
lover
At noon the slumberous poppies over,
Was something hidden from mine eyes,

Till once, upon a rock's brown bosom,
Bright as a thorny cactus-blossom,
I saw a butterfly at rest ;
Then first of both I felt the beauty ;
The airy whim, the grim-set duty,
Each from the other took its best.

Clearer it grew than winter sky
That Nature still had reasons why ;
And, shifting sudden as a breeze,
My fancy found no satisfaction,
No antithetic sweet attraction,
So great as in the Nomades.

Scythians, with Nature not at strife,
Light Arabs of our complex life,

They build no houses, plant no mills
To utilize Time's sliding river,
Content that it flow waste forever,
If they, like it, may have their wills.

An hour they pitch their shifting tents
In thoughts, in feelings, and events ;
Beneath the palm-trees, on the grass,
They sing, they dance, make love, and
chatter,
Vex the grim temples with their clatter,
And make Truth's fount their looking-
glass.

A picnic life ; from love to love,
From faith to faith they lightly move,
And yet, hard-eyed philosopher,
The flightiest maid that ever hovered
To me your thought-webs fine discov-
ered,
No lens to see them through like her.

So witchingly her finger-tips
To Wisdom, as away she trips,
She kisses, waves such sweet farewells
To Duty, as she laughs " To-morrow ! "
That both from that mad contrast bor-
row
A perfectness found nowhere else.

The beach-bird on its pearly verge
Follows and flies the whispering surge,
While, in his tent, the rock-stayed shell
Awaits the flood's star-timed vibrations,
And both, the flutter and the patience,
The sauntering poet loves them well.

Fulfil so much of God's decree
As works its problem out in thee,
Nor dream that in thy breast alone
The conscience of the changeful sea-
sons,
The Will that in the planets reasons
With Space-wide logic, has its throne.

Thy virtue makes not vice of mine,
Unlike, but none the less divine ;
Thy toil adorns, not chides, my play ;
Nature of sameness is so chary,
With such wild whim the freakish fairy
Picks presents for the christening-day.

SELF-STUDY.

A PRESENCE both by night and day,
That made my life seem just begun,
Yet scarce a presence, rather say
The warning aureole of one.

And yet I felt it everywhere ;
Walked I the woodland's aisles along,
It seemed to brush me with its hair ;
Bathed I, I heard a mermaid's song.

How sweet it was ! A buttercup
Could hold for me a day's delight,
A bird could lift my fancy up
To ether free from cloud or blight.

Who was the nymph ? Nay, I will see,
Methought, and I will know her near ;
If such, divined, her charm can be,
Seen and possessed, how triply dear !

So every magic art I tried,
And spells as numberless as sand,
Until, one evening, by my side
I saw her glowing fulness stand.

I turned to clasp her, but "Farewell,"
Parting she sighed, "we meet no more ;
Not by my hand the curtain fell
That leaves you conscious, wise, and
poor.

"Since you have found me out, I go ;
Another lover I must find,
Content his happiness to know,
Nor strive its secret to unwind."

—

PICTURES FROM APPLIEDORE.

I.

A HEAP of bare and splintery crags
Tumbled about by lightning and frost,
With rifts and chasms and storm-
bleached jags,
That wait and growl for a ship to be
lost ;

No island, but rather the skeleton
Of a wrecked and vengeance-smitten
one,

Where, æons ago, with half-shut eye,
The sluggish saurian crawled to die,

Gasping under titanic ferns ;
Ribs of rock that seaward jut,
Granite shoulders and boulders and
snags,
Round which, though the winds in
heaven be shut,
The nightmared ocean murmurs and
yearns,
Welters, and swashes, and tosses, and
turns,
And the dreary black sea-weed lolls and
wags ;

Only rock from shore to shore,
Only a moan through the bleak clefts
blown,
With sobs in the rifts where the coarse
kelp shifts,
Falling and lifting, tossing and drifting,
And under all a deep, dull roar,
Dying and swelling, forevermore, —
Rock and moan and roar alone,
And the dread of some nameless thing
unknown,
These make Appledore.

These make Appledore by night :
Then there are monsters left and right ;
Every rock is a different monster ;
All you have read of, fancied, dreamed,
When you waked at night because you
screamed,
There they lie for half a mile,
Jumbled together in a pile,
And (though you know they never once
stir),

If you look long, they seem to be
moving
Just as plainly as plain can be,
Crushing and crowding, wading and
shoving

Out into the awful sea,
Where you can hear them snort and
spout

With pauses between, as if they were
listening,
Then tumult anon when the surf breaks
glistening
In the blackness where they wallow
about.

II.

All this you would scarcely comprehend,
Should you see the isle on a sunny day ;
Then it is simple enough in its way, —

Two rocky bulges, one at each end,
With a smaller bulge and a hollow be-
tween;

Patches of whortieberry and bay;
Accidents of open green,
Sprinkled with loose slabs square and
gray,
Like graveyards for ages deserted; a
few

Unsocial thistles; an elder or two,
Foamed over with blossoms white as
spray;

And on the whole island never a tree
Save a score of sumachs, high as your
knee,

That crouch in hollows where they may,
(The cellars where once stood a village,
men say,)

Huddling for warmth, and never grew
Tall enough for a peep at the sea;
A general dazzle of open blue;
A breeze always blowing and playing
rat-tat

With the bow of the ribbon round your
hat;

A score of sheep that do nothing but
stare

Up or down at you everywhere;
Three or four cattle that chew the cud
Lying about in a listless despair;

A medrick that makes you look over-
head

With short, sharp scream, as he sights
his prey,

And, dropping straight and swift as
lead,

Splits the water with sudden thud; —
This is Appledore by day.

A common island, you will say;
But stay a moment: only climb
Up to the highest rock of the isle,
Stand there alone for a little while,
And with gentle approaches it grows
sublime,

Dilating slowly as you win
A sense from the silence to take it in.
So wide the loneliness, so lucid the air,
The granite beneath you so savagely
bare,

You well might think you were looking
down

From some sky-silenced mountain's
crown,

Whose far-down pines are wont to tear
Locks of wool from the topmost cloud.
Only be sure you go alone,

For Grandeur is inaccessibly proud,
And never yet has backward thrown
Her veil to feed the stare of a crowd;
To more than one was never shown
That awful front, nor is it fit
That she, Cothurnus-shod, stand bowed

Until the self-approving pit
Enjoy the gust of its own wit
In babbling plaudits cheaply loud;

She hides her mountains and her sea
From the harriers of scenery,
Who hunt down sunsets, and huddle
and bay,

Mouthing and mumbling the dying day.

Trust me, 't is something to be cast
Face to face with one's Self at last,
To be taken out of the fuss and strife,
The endless clatter of plate and knife,
The bore of books and the bores of the
street,

From the singular mess we agree to call
Life,

Where that is best which the most fools
vote is,

And to be set down on one's own two
feet

So nigh to the great warm heart of
God,

You almost seem to feel it beat
Down from the sunshine and up from
the sod;

To be compelled, as it were, to notice
All the beautiful changes and chances
Through which the landscape flits and
glances,

And to see how the face of common
day

Is written all over with tender histories,
When you study it that intenser way
In which a lover looks at his mistress.

Till now you dreamed not what could
be done

With a bit of rock and a ray of sun;
But look, how fade the lights and shades
Of keen bare edge and crevice deep!

How doubtfully it fades and fades,
And glows again, yon craggy steep,
O'er which, through color's dreamiest
grades,

The yellow sunbeams pause and creep !
Now pink it blooms, now glimmers
gray,

Now shadows to a filmy blue,
Tries one, tries all, and will not stay,
But flits from opal hue to hue,
And runs through every tenderest range
Of change that seems not to be change,
So rare the sweep, so nice the art,
That lays no stress on any part,
But shifts and lingers and persuades ;
So soft that sun-brush in the west,
That asks no costlier pigments' aids,
But mingling knobs, flaws, angles,
dints,

Indifferent of worst or best,
Enchants the cliffs with wraiths and
hints

And gracious preludings of tints,
Where all seems fixed, yet all evades,
And indefinitely pervades
Perpetual movement with perpetual
rest !

III.

Away northeast is Boone Island light ;
You might mistake it for a ship,
Only it stands too plumb upright,
And like the others does not slip
Behind the sea's unsteady brink ;
Though, if a cloud-shade chance to dip
Upon it a moment, 't will suddenly sink,
Levelled and lost in the darkened main,
Till the sun builds it suddenly up again,
As if with a rub of Aladdin's lamp.

On the main-land you see a misty camp
Of mountains pitched tumultuously :
That one looming so long and large
Is Saddleback, and that point you see
Over yon low and rounded marge,
Like the boss of a sleeping giant's targe
Laid over his breast, is Ossipee ;
That shadow there may be Kearsarge ;
That must be Great Haystack ; I love
these names,

Wherewith the lonely farmer tames
Nature to mute companionship
With his own mind's domestic mood,
And strives the surly world to clip
In the arms of familiar habitude.
'T is well he could not contrive to make
A Saxon of Agamenticus :
He glowers there to the north of us,
Wraught in his blanket of blue haze,

Unconvertibly savage, and scorns to
take

The white man's baptism or his ways.
Him first on shore the coaster divines
Through the early gray, and sees him
shake

The morning mist from his scalp-lock
of pines ;

Him first the skipper makes out in the
west,

Ere the earliest sunstreak shoots trem-
ulous,

Plashing with orange the palpitant lines
Of mutable billow, crest after crest,
And murmurs *Agamenticus !*

As if it were the name of a saint.
But is that a mountain playing cloud,
Or a cloud playing mountain, just there,
so faint ?

Look along over the low right shoulder
Of Agamenticus into that crowd
Of brassy thunderheads behind it ;
Now you have caught it, but, ere you
are older

By half an hour, you will lose it and
find it

A score of times ; while you look 't is
gone,

And, just as you've given it up, anon
It is there again, till your weary eyes
Fancy they see it waver and rise,
With its brother clouds ; it is Agio-
chook,

There if you seek not, and gone if you
look,

Ninety miles off as the eagle flies.

But mountains make not all the shore
The main-land shows to Appledore ;
Eight miles the heaving water spreads
To a long low coast with beaches and
heads

That run through unimagined mazes,
As the lights and shades and magical
hazes

Put them away or bring them near,
Shimmering, sketched out for thirty
miles

Between two capes that waver like
threads,

And sink in the ocean, and reappear,
Crumbled and melted to little isles,
With filmy trees, that seem the mere
Half-fancies of drowsy atmosphere ;

And see the beach there, where it is
 Flat as a threshing-floor, beaten and
 packed
 With the flashing flails of weariless
 seas,
 How it lifts and looms to a precipice,
 O'er whose square front, a dream, no
 more,
 The steepened sand-stripes seem to
 pour,
 A murmurless vision of cataract ;
 You almost fancy you hear a roar,
 Fitful and faint from the distance wan-
 dering ;
 But 't is only the blind old ocean maun-
 dering,
 Raking the shingle to and fro,
 Aimlessly clutching and letting go
 The kelp-haired sedges of Appledore,
 Slipping down with a sleepy forgetting,
 And anon his ponderous shoulder set-
 ting,
 With a deep, hoarse pant against Ap-
 pledore.

IV.

Eastward as far as the eye can see,
 Still eastward, eastward, endlessly,
 The sparkle and tremor of purple sea
 That rises before you, a flickering hill,
 On and on to the shut of the sky,
 And beyond, you fancy it sloping until
 The same multitudinous throb and thrill
 That vibrate under your dizzy eye
 In ripples of orange and pink are sent
 Where the popped sails doze on the
 yard,
 And the clumsy junk and proa lie
 Sunk deep with precious woods and
 nard,
 'Mid the palmy isles of the Orient.
 Those leaning towers of clouded
 white
 On the farthest brink of doubtful ocean,
 That shorten and shorten out of sight,
 Yet seem on the selfsame spot to stay,
 Receding with a motionless motion,
 Fading to dubious films of gray,
 Lost, dimly found, then vanished
 wholly,
 Will rise again, the great world under,
 First films, then towers, then high-
 heaped clouds,

Whose nearing outlines sharpen slow
 Into tall ships with cobweb shrouds,
 That fill long Mongol eyes with wonder,
 Crushing the violet wave to spray
 Past some low headland of Cathay ; —
 What was that sigh which seemed so
 near,
 Chilling your fancy to the core ?
 'T is only the sad old sea you hear,
 That seems to seek forevermore
 Something it cannot find, and so,
 Sighing, seeks on, and tells its woe
 To the pitiless breakers of Appledore.

V.

How looks Appledore in a storm ?
 I have seen it when its crags seemed
 frantic,
 Butting against the mad Atlantic,
 When surge on surge would heap
 enorme,
 Cliffs of emerald topped with snow,
 That lifted and lifted, and then let go
 A great white avalanche of thunder,
 A grinding, blinding, deafening ire
 Monadnock might have trembled under ;
 And the island, whose rock-roots
 pierce below
 To where they are warmed with the
 central fire,
 You could feel its granite fibres racked,
 As it seemed to plunge with a shud-
 der and thrill
 Right at the breast of the swooping
 hill,
 And to rise again snorting a cataract
 Of rage-froth from every cranny and
 ledge,
 While the sea drew its breath in
 hoarse and deep,
 And the next vast breaker curled its
 edge,
 Gathering itself for a mightier leap.
 North, east, and south there are reefs
 and breakers
 You would never dream of in smooth
 weather,
 That toss and gore the sea for acres,
 Bellowing and gnashing and snarling
 together ;
 Look northward, where Duck Island
 lies,

And over its crown you will see arise,
 Against a background of slaty skies,
 A row of pillars still and white,
 That glimmer, and then are out of
 sight,
 As if the moon should suddenly kiss,
 While you crossed the gusty desert
 by night,
 The long colonnades of Persepolis ;
 Look southward for White Island light,
 The lantern stands ninety feet o'er
 the tide ;
 There is first a half-mile of tumult and
 fight,
 Of dash and roar and tumble and fright,
 And surging bewilderment wild and
 wide,
 Where the breakers struggle left and
 right,
 Then a mile or more of rushing sea,
 And then the light-house slim and lone ;
 And whenever the weight of ocean is
 thrown
 Full and fair on White Island head,
 A great mist-jotun you will see
 Lifting himself up silently
 High and huge o'er the light-house top,
 With hands of wavering spray out-
 spread,
 Gropping after the little tower,
 That seems to shrink and shorten and
 cower,
 Till the monster's arms of a sudden
 drop,
 And silently and fruitlessly
 He sinks again into the sea.
 You, meanwhile, where drenched you
 stand,
 Awaken once more to the rush and
 roar,
 And on the rock-point tighten your
 hand,
 As you turn and see a valley deep,
 That was not there a moment before,
 Suck rattling down between you and a
 heap
 Of toppling billow, whose instant fall
 Must sink the whole island once for
 all,
 Or watch the silenter, stealthier seas
 Feeling their way to you more and
 more ;
 If they once should clutch you high as
 the knees,

They would whirl you down like a sprig
 of kelp,
 Beyond all reach of hope or help ; —
 And such in a storm is Appledore.

VI.

'T is the sight of a lifetime to behold
 The great shorn sun as you see it now,
 Across eight miles of undulant gold
 That widens landward, weltered and
 rolled,
 With freaks of shadow and crimson
 stains ;
 To see the solid mountain brow
 As it notches the disk, and gains and
 gains
 Until there comes, you scarce know
 when,
 A tremble of fire o'er the parted lips
 Of cloud and mountain, which van-
 ishes — then
 From the body of day the sun-soul
 slips
 And the face of earth darkens ; but now
 the strips
 Of western vapor, straight and thin,
 From which the horizon's swervings
 win
 A grace of contrast, take fire and burn
 Like splinters of touchwood, whose
 edges a mould
 Of ashes o'erfeathers ; northward turn
 For an instant, and let your eye grow
 cold
 On Agamenticus, and when once more
 You look, 't is as if the land-breeze,
 growing,
 From the smouldering brands the film
 were blowing,
 And brightening them down to the very
 core ;
 Yet they momentarily cool and dampen
 and deaden,
 The crimson turns golden, the gold
 turns leaden,
 Hardening into one black bar
 O'er which, from the hollow heaven
 afar,
 Shoots a splinter of light like diamond,
 Half seen, half fancied : by and by
 Beyond whatever is most beyond
 In the uttermost waste of desert sky,
 Grows a star ;
 And over it, visible spirit of dew, —

Ah, stir not, speak not, hold your
breath,

Or surely the miracle vanisheth, —
The new moon, tranced in unspeakable
blue !

No frail illusion ; this were true,
Rather, to call it the canoe
Hollowed out of a single pearl,
That floats us from the Present's whirl
Back to those beings which were ours,
When wishes were winged things like
powers !

Call it not light, that mystery tender,
Which broods upon the brooding ocean,
That flush of ecstasied surrender
To indefinable emotion,
That glory, mellower than a mist
Of pearl dissolved with amethyst,
Which rims Square Rock, like what
they paint
Of mitigated heavenly splendor
Round the stern forehead of a Saint !

No more a vision, reddened, largened,
The moon dips toward her mountain
nest,

And, fringing it with palest argent,
Slow sheathes herself behind the mar-
gent

Of that long cloud-bar in the West,
Whose nether edge, erelong, you see
The silvery chrim in turn anoint,
And then the tiniest rosy point
Touched doubtfully and timidly
Into the dark blue's chilly strip,
As some mute, wondering thing below,
Awakened by the thrilling glow,
Might, looking up, see Dian dip
One lucent foot's delaying tip
In Latmian fountains long ago.

Knew you what silence was before?
Here is no startle of dreaming bird
That sings in his sleep, or strives to sing;
Here is no sough of branches stirred,
Nor noise of any living thing,
Such as one hears by night on shore ;
Only, now and then, a sigh,
With fickle intervals between,
Sometimes far, and sometimes nigh,
Such as Andromeda might have heard,
And fancied the huge sea-beast unseen
Turning in sleep ; it is the sea
That welters and wavers uneasily
Round the lonely reefs of Appledore.

THE WIND-HARP.

I TREASURE in secret some long, fine
hair

Of tenderest brown, but so inwardly
golden

I half used to fancy the sunshine there,
So shy, so shifting, so waywardly rare,

Was only caught for the moment and
holden

While I could say *Dearest!* and kiss
it, and then

In pity let go to the summer*again.

I twisted this magic in gossamer strings
Over a wind-harp's Delphian hollow ;

Then called to the idle breeze that
swings

All day in the pine-tops, and clings, and
sings

'Mid the musical leaves, and said, "O,
follow

The will of those tears that deepen my
words,

And fly to my window to waken these
chords."

So they trembled to life, and, doubt-
fully

Feeling their way to my sense, sang,
"Say whether

They sit all day by the greenwood tree,
The lover and loved, as it wont to be,

When we " — but grief con-
quered, and all together

They swelled such weird murmur as
haunts a shore

Of some planet dispeopled, — "Never-
more!"

Then from deep in the past, as seemed
to me,

The strings gathered sorrow and sang
forsaken,

"One lover still waits 'neath the green-
wood tree,

But 't is dark," and they shuddered,
"where lieth she

Dark and cold! Forever must one
be taken?"

But I groaned, "O harp of all ruth
bereft,

This Scripture is sadder, — 'the other
left'!"

There murmured, as if one strove to
 speak,
 And tears came instead ; then the sad
 tones wandered
 And faltered among the uncertain
 chords
 In a troubled doubt between sorrow and
 words ;
 At last with themselves they ques-
 tioned and pondered,
 " Hereafter? — who knoweth? " and so
 they sighed
 Down the long steps that lead to silence
 and died.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN !

SUMMER.

THE little gate was reached at last,
 Half hid in lilacs down the lane ;
 She pushed it wide, and, as she past,
 A wistful look she backward cast,
 And said, — "*Auf wiedersehen !*"

With hand on latch, a vision white
 Lingered reluctant, and again
 Half doubting if she did aright,
 Soft as the dews that fell that night,
 She said, — "*Auf wiedersehen !*"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair ;
 I linger in delicious pain :
 Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
 To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
 Thinks she, — "*Auf wiedersehen !*"

'T is thirteen years ; once more I press
 The turf that silences the lane ;
 I hear the rustle of her dress,
 I smell the lilacs, and — ah, yes,
 I hear "*Auf wiedersehen !*"

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art !
 The English words had seemed too
 faint,
 But these — they drew us heart to heart,
 Yet held us tenderly apart ;
 She said, "*Auf wiedersehen !*"

PALINODE.

AUTUMN.

STILL thirteen years : 't is autumn now
 On field and hill, in heart and brain ;
 The naked trees at evening sigh ;
 The leaf to the forsaken bough
 Sighs not, — " We meet again ! "

Two watched yon oriole's pendent
 dome,
 That now is void, and dank with rain,
 And one, — O, hope more frail than
 foam !
 The bird to his deserted home
 Sings not, — " We meet again ! "

The loath gate swings with rusty creak ;
 Once, parting there, we played at
 pain :
 There came a parting, when the weak
 And fading lips essayed to speak
 Vainly, — " We meet again ! "

Somewhere is comfort, somewhere faith,
 Though thou in outer dark remain ;
 One sweet sad voice ennobles death,
 And still, for eighteen centuries saith
 Softly, — " Ye meet again ! "

If earth another grave must bear,
 Yet heaven hath won a sweeter strain,
 And something whispers my despair,
 That, from an orient chamber there,
 Floats down, " We meet again ! "

AFTER THE BURIAL.

YES, faith is a goodly anchor ;
 When skies are sweet as a psalm,
 At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
 In bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward
 The tattered surges are hurled,
 It may keep our head to the tempest,
 With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
 What help in its iron thews,
 Still true to the broken hawser,
 Deep down among sea-weed and ooze ?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of Memory,
One broken plank of the Past,
That our human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last !

'Tis the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket
With its anguish of deathless hair !

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret, —
Immortal away from me.

There 's a narrow ridge in the grave-
yard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of Space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearily true ;
But, since the earth clashed on *her*
coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it ;
'T is a well-meant alms of breath ;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

It is pagan ; but wait till you feel it, —
That jar of our earth, that dull shock
When the ploughshare of deeper pas-
sion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit ! Forgive me,
But I, who am earthy and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dream-
land
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

THE DEAD HOUSE.

HERE once my step was quickened,
Here beckoned the opening door,
And welcome thrilled from the threshold
To the foot it had known before.

A glow came forth to meet me
From the flame that laughed in the
grate,
And shadows advance on the ceiling,
Danced blither with mine for a mate.

"I claim you, old friend," yawned the
arm-chair,
"This corner, you know, is your
seat" ;
"Rest your slippers on me," beamed
the fender,
"I brighten at touch of your feet."

"We know the practised finger,"
Said the books, "that seems like
brain" ;
And the shy page rustled the secret
It had kept till I came again.

Sang the pillow, "My down once
quivered
On nightingales' throats that flew
Through moonlit gardens of Hafiz
To gather quaint dreams for you."

Ah me, where the Past sowed heart's-
ease,
The Present plucks rue for us men !
I come back : that scar unhealing
Was not in the churchyard then.

But, I think, the house is unaltered,
I will go and beg to look
At the rooms that were once familiar
To my life as its bed to a brook.

Unaltered ! Alas for the sameness
That makes the change but more !
'T is a dead man I see in the mirrors,
'T is his tread that chills the floor !

To learn such a simple lesson,
Need I go to Paris and Rome,
That the many make the household,
But only one the home ?

'T was just a womanly presence,
 An influence unexpressed,
 But a rose she had worn, on my grave-
 sod
 Were more than long life with the
 rest !

'T was a smile, 't was a garment's
 rustle,
 'T was nothing that I can phrase,
 But the whole dumb dwelling grew
 conscious,
 And put on her looks and ways.

Were it mine I would close the shutters,
 Like lids when the life is fled,
 And the funeral fire should wind it,
 This corpse of a home that is dead.

For it died that autumn morning
 When she, its soul, was borne
 To lie all dark on the hillside
 That looks over woodland and corn.

A MOOD.

PINE in the distance,
 Patient through sun or rain,
 Meeting with graceful persistence,
 With yielding but rooted resistance,
 The northwind's wrench and strain,
 No memory of past existence
 Brings thee pain ;
 Right for the zenith heading,
 Friendly with heat or cold,
 Thine arms to the influence spreading
 Of the heavens, just from of old,
 Thou only aspirest the more,
 Unregretful the old leaves shedding
 That fringed thee with music before,
 And deeper thy roots embedding
 In the grace and the beauty of yore ;
 Thou sigh'st not, " Alas, I am older,
 The green of last summer is sear ! "
 But loftier, hopefuller, bolder,
 Wins broader horizons each year.

To me 't is not cheer thou art singing :
 There 's a sound of the sea,
 O mournful tree,
 In thy boughs forever clinging,
 And the far-off roar

Of waves on the shore
 A shattered vessel flinging.

As thou musest still of the ocean
 On which thou must float at last,
 And seem'st to foreknow
 The shipwreck's woe
 And the sailor wrenched from the
 broken mast,
 Do I, in this vague emotion,
 This sadness that will not pass,
 Though the air throbs with wings,
 And the field laughs and sings,
 Do I forebode, alas !
 The ship-building longer and wearier,
 The voyage's struggle and strife,
 And then the darker and drearier
 Wreck of a broken life ?

THE VOYAGE TO VINLAND

I.

BIÖRN'S BECKONERS.

Now Biörn, the son of Heriulf, had ill
 days
 Because the heart within him seethed
 with blood
 That would not be allayed with any
 toil,
 Whether of war or hunting or the oar,
 But was anhungered for some joy un-
 tried :
 For the brain grew not weary with the
 limbs,
 But, while they slept, still hammered
 like a Troll,
 Building all night a bridge of solid
 dream
 Between him and some purpose of his
 soul,
 Or will to find a purpose. With the
 dawn
 The sleep-laid timbers, crumbled to
 soft mist,
 Denied all foothold. But the dream
 remained,
 And every night with yellow-bearded
 kings
 His sleep was haunted, — mighty men
 of old,

Once young as he, now ancient like the
 gods,
 And safe as stars in all men's memories.
 Strange sagas read he in their sea-blue
 eyes
 Cold as the sea, grandly compassion-
 less ;
 Like life, they made him eager and
 then mocked.
 Nay, broad awake, they would not let
 him be ;
 They shaped themselves gigantic in the
 mist,
 They rose far-beckoning in the lamps
 of heaven,
 They whispered invitation in the winds,
 And breath came from them, mightier
 than the wind,
 To strain the lagging sails of his resolve,
 Till that grew passion which before was
 wish,
 And youth seemed all too costly to be
 staked
 On the soiled cards wherewith men
 played their game,
 Letting Time pocket up the larger life,
 Lost with base gain of raiment, food,
 and roof.
 "What helpeth lightness of the feet?"
 they said,
 "Oblivion runs with swifter foot than
 they ;
 Or strength of sinew? New men come
 as strong,
 And those sleep nameless ; or renown
 in war?
 Swords grave no name on the long-
 memoried rock
 But moss shall hide it ; they alone who
 wring
 Some secret purpose from the unwilling
 gods
 Survive in song for yet a little while
 To vex, like us, the dreams of later men,
 Ourselves a dream, and dreamlike all
 we did."

II.

THORWALD'S LAY.

So Biörn went comfortless but for his
 thought,
 And by his thought the more discom-
 forted,

Till Eric Thurlson kept his Yule-tide
 feast :
 And thither came he, called among the
 rest,
 Silent, lone-minded, a church-door to
 mirth :
 But, ere deep draughts forbade such
 serious song
 As the grave Skald might chant, nor
 after blush,
 Then Eric looked at Thorwald, where
 he sat,
 Mute as a cloud amid the stormy hall,
 And said : "O Skald, sing now an
 olden song,
 Such as our fathers heard who led great
 lives ;
 And, as the bravest on a shield is borne
 Along the waving host that shouts him
 king,
 So rode their thrones upon the throng-
 ing seas !"
 Then the old man arose ; white-haired
 he stood,
 White-bearded, and with eyes that
 looked afar
 From their still region of perpetual
 snow,
 Beyond the little smokes and stirs of
 men :
 His head was bowed with gathered
 flakes of years,
 As winter bends the sea-foreboding
 pine,
 But something triumphed in his brow
 and eye,
 Which whoso saw it could not see and
 crouch :
 Loud rang the emptied beakers as he
 mused,
 Brooding his eyried thoughts ; then, as
 an eagle
 Circles smooth-winged above the wind-
 vexed woods,
 So wheeled his soul into the air of song
 High o'er the stormy hall ; and thus he
 sang :
 "The fletcher for his arrow-shaft picks
 out
 Wood closest-grained, long-seasoned,
 straight as light ;
 And from a quiver full of such as these
 The wary Bowman, matched against his
 peers,

Long doubting, singles yet once more
the best.

Who is it needs such flawless shafts as
Fate?

What archer of his arrows is so choice,
Or hits the white so surely? They are
men,

The chosen of her quiver; nor for her
Will every reed suffice, or cross-grained
stick

At random from life's vulgar fagot
plucked:

Such answer household ends; but she
will have

Souls straight and clear, of toughest
fibre, sound

Down to the heart of heart; from these
she strips

All needless stuff, all sapwood, seasons
them,

From circumstance untoward feathers
plucks

Crumpled and cheap, and barbs with
iron will:

The hour that passes is her quiver-boy:
When she draws bow, 't is not across
the wind,

Nor 'gainst the sun her haste-snatched
arrow sings,

For sun and wind have plighted faith to
her:

Ere men have heard the sinew twang,
behold

In the butt's heart her trembling mes-
senger!

"The song is old and simple that I
sing;

But old and simple are despised as
cheap,

Though hardest to achieve of human
things:

Good were the days of yore, when men
were tried

By ring of shields, as now by ring of
words;

But while the gods are left, and hearts
of men,

And unlocked ocean, still the days are
good.

Still o'er the earth hastes Opportunity,
Seeking the hardy soul that seeks for
her.

Be not abroad, nor deaf with household
cares

That chatter loudest as they mean the
least;

Swift-willed is thrice-willed; late means
nevermore;

Impatient is her foot, nor turns again."

He ceased; upon his bosom sank his
beard

Sadly, as one who oft had seen her pass
Nor stayed her: and forthwith the
frothy tide

Of interrupted wassail roared along;

But Biörn, the son of Heriulf, sat apart
Musing, and, with his eyes upon the fire,
Saw shapes of arrows, lost as soon as
seen.

"A ship," he muttered, "is a winged
bridge

That leadeth every way to man's desire,
And ocean the wide gate to manful
luck";

And then with that resolve his heart
was bent,

Which, like a humming shaft, through
many a stripe

Of day and night, across the unpath-
wayed seas

Shot the brave prow that cut on Vinland
sands

The first rune in the Saga of the West.

III.

GUDRIDA'S PROPHECY.

Four weeks they sailed, a speck in sky-
shut seas,

Life, where was never life that knew
itself,

But tumbled lubber-like in blowing
whales;

Thought, where the like had never been
before

Since Thought primeval brooded the
abyss;

Alone as men were never in the world.
They saw the icy foundlings of the sea,

White cliffs of silence, beautiful by day,
Or looming, sudden-perilous, at night

In monstrous hush; or sometimes in
the dark

The waves broke ominous with paly
gleams

Crushed by the prow in sparkles of
cold fire.

Then came green stripes of sea that
 promised land
 But brought it not, and on the thirtieth
 day
 Low in the West were wooded shores
 like cloud.
 They shouted as men shout with sud-
 den hope ;
 But Biörn was silent, such strange loss
 there is
 Between the dream's fulfilment and the
 dream,
 Such sad abatement in the goal attained.
 Then Gudrida, that was a prophetess,
 Rapt with strange influence from At-
 lantis sang :
 Her words : the vision was the dream-
 ing shore's.

Looms there the New Land :
 Locked in the shadow
 Long the gods shut it,
 Niggards of newness
 They, the o'er-old.

Little it looks there,
 Slim as a cloud-streak ;
 It shall fold peoples
 Even as a shepherd
 Foldeth his flock.

Silent it sleeps now ;
 Great ships shall seek it,
 Swarming as salmon ;
 Noise of its numbers
 Two seas shall hear.

Men from the Northland,
 Men from the Southland,
 Haste empty-handed ;
 No more than manhood
 Bring they, and hands.

Dark hair and fair hair,
 Red blood and blue blood,
 There shall be mingled ;
 Force of the ferment
 Makes the New Man.

Pick of all kindreds,
 King's blood shall theirs be,
 Shoots of the eldest
 Stock upon Midgard,
 Sons of the poor.

Them waits the New Land ;
 They shall subdue it,
 Leaving their sons' sons
 Space for the body,
 Space for the soul.

Leaving their sons' sons
 All things save song-craft,
 Plant long in growing,
 Thrusting its tap-root
 Deep in the Gone.

Here men shall grow up
 Strong from self-helping ;
 Eyes for the present
 Bring they as eagles',
 Blind to the Past.

They shall make over
 Creed, law, and custom ;
 Driving-men, doughty
 Builders of empire,
 Builders of men.

Here are no singers ;
 What should they sing of ?
 They, the unresting ?
 Labor is ugly,
 Loathsome is change.

Those the old gods hate,
 Dwellers in dream-land,
 Drinking delusion
 Out of the empty
 Skull of the Past.

These hate the old gods,
 Warring against them ;
 Fatal to Odin,
 Here the wolf Fenrir
 Lieth in wait.

Here the gods' Twilight
 Gathers, earth-gulging ;
 Blackness of battle,
 Fierce till the Old World
 Flares up in fire.

Doubt not, my Northmen ;
 Fate loves the fearless ;
 Fools, when their roof-tree
 Falls, think it doomsday ;
 Firm stands the sky.

Over the ruin
See I the promise ;
Crisp waves the cornfield,
Peace-walled, the homestead
Waits open-doored.

There lies the New Land ;
Yours to behold it,
Not to possess it ;
Slowly Fate's perfect
Fulness shall come.

Then from your strong loins
Seed shall be scattered,
Men to the marrow,
Wilderness tamers,
Walkers of waves.

Jealous, the old gods
Shut it in shadow,
Wisely they ward it,
Egg of the serpent,
Bane to them all.

Stronger and sweeter
New gods shall seek it
Fill it with man-folk
Wise for the future.
Wise from the past.

Here all is all men's,
Save only Wisdom ;
King he that wins her ;
Him hail they helmsman,
Highest of heart.

Might makes no master
Here any longer ;
Sword is not swayer ;
Here e'en the gods are
Selfish no more.

Walking the New Earth,
Lo, a divine One
Greeted all men godlike,
Calls them his kindred,
He, the Divine.

Is it Thor's hammer
Rays in his right hand ?
Weaponless walks he ;
It is the White Christ,
Stronger than Thor.

Here shall a realm rise
Mighty in manhood ;
Justice and Mercy
Here set a stronghold
Safe without spear.

Weak was the Old World,
Wearily war-fenced ;
Out of its ashes,
Strong as the morning,
Springeth the New.

Beauty of promise,
Promise of beauty,
Safe in the silence
Sleep thou, till cometh
Light to thy lids !

Thee shall awaken
Flame from the furnace,
Bath of all brave ones,
Cleanser of conscience,
Welder of will.

Lowly shall love thee,
Thee, open-handed !
Stalwart shall shield thee,
Thee, worth their best blood,
Waif of the West !

Then shall come singers,
Singing no swan-song,
Birth-carols, rather,
Meet for the man-child
Mighty of bone.

MAHMOOD THE IMAGE-BREAKER.

OLD events have modern meanings ;
only that survives
Of past history which finds kindred in
all hearts and lives.

Mahmood once, the idol-breaker,
spreader of the Faith,
Was at Sunnat tempted sorely, as the
legend saith.

In the great pagoda's centre, monstrous
and abhorred,
Granite on a throne of granite, sat the
temple's lord.

Mahmood paused a moment, silenced
by the silent face
That, with eyes of stone unwavering,
awed the ancient place.

Then the Brahmins knelt before him,
by his doubt made bold,
Pledging for their idol's ransom count-
less gems and gold.

Gold was yellow dirt to Mahmood, but
of precious use,
Since from it the roots of power suck
a potent juice.

"Were yon stone alone in question,
this would please me well,"
Mahmood said; "but, with the block
there, I my truth must sell.

"Wealth and rule slip down with For-
tune, as her wheel turns round;
He who keeps his faith, he only cannot
be discrowned.

"Little were a change of station, loss
of life or crown,
But the wreck were past retrieving if
the Man fell down."

So his iron mace he lifted, smote with
might and main,
And the idol, on the pavement tum-
bling, burst in twain.

Luck obeys the downright striker;
from the hollow core,
Fifty times the Brahmins' offer deluged
all the floor.

INVITA MINERVA.

THE Bardling came where by a river
grew
The pennoned reeds, that, as the west-
wind blew,
Gleamed and sighed plaintively, as if
they knew
What music slept enchanted in each
stem,
'Till Pan should choose some happy one
of them,
And with wise lips enliven it through and
through.

The Bardling thought, "A pipe is all
I need;
Once I have sought me out a clear,
smooth reed,
And shaped it to my fancy, I proceed
'To breathe such strains as, yonder 'mid
the rocks,
The strange youth blows, that tends
Admetus' flocks,
And all the maidens will to me pay
heed."

The summer day he spent in questful
round,
And many a reed he marred, but never
found
A conjuring-spell to free the imprisoned
sound;
At last his vainly wearied limbs he laid
Beneath a sacred laurel's flickering
shade,
And sleep about his brain her cobweb
wound.

Then strode the mighty Mother through
his dreams,
Saying: "The reeds along a thousand
streams
Are mine, and who is he that plots and
schemes
To snare the melodies wherewith my
breath
Sounds through the double pipes of Life
and Death,
Atoning what to men mad discord
seems?"

"He seeks not me, but I seek oft in
vain
For him who shall my voiceful reeds
constrain,
And make them utter their melodious
pain;
He flies the immortal gift, for well he
knows
His life of life must with its overflows
Flood the unthankful pipe, nor come
again.

"Thou fool, who dost my harmless
subjects wrong,
'T is not the singer's wish that makes
the song:
The rhythmic beauty wanders dumb,
how long,

Nor stoops to any daintiest instrument,
Till, found its mated lips, their sweet
consent
Makes mortal breath than Time and
Fate more strong."

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

I.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
By no sadder spirit
Than blackbirds and thrushes,
That whistle to cheer it
All day in the bushes,
This woodland is haunted :
And in a small clearing,
Beyond sight or hearing
Of human annoyance,
The little fount gushes,
First smoothly, then dashes
And gurgles and flashes,
To the maples and ashes
Confiding its joyance ;
Unconscious confiding,
Then, silent and glossy,
Slips winding and hiding
Through alder-stems mossy,
Through gossamer roots
Fine as nerves,
That tremble, as shoots
Through their magnetized curves
The allurements delicious
Of the water's capricious
Thrills, gushes, and swerves.

II.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
I am writing no fiction ;
And this fount, its sole daughter,
To the woodland was granted
To pour holy water
And win benediction ;
In summer-noon flushes,
When all the wood hushes,
Blue dragon-flies knitting
To and fro in the sun,
With sidelong jerk flitting
Sink down on the rushes,
And, motionless sitting,
Hear it bubble and run,

Hear its low inward singing,
With level wings swinging
On green tasselled rushes,
To dream in the sun.

III.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
The great August noonlight,
Through myriad rifts slanted,
Leaf and bole thickly sprinkles
With flickering gold ;
There, in warm August gloaming-
With quick, silent brightenings,
From meadow-lands roaming,
The firefly twinkles
His fitful heat-lightnings ;
There the magical moonlight
With meek, saintly glory
Steeps summit and wold ;
There whippoorwills plain in the
solitudes hoary
With lone cries that wander
Now hither, now yonder,
Like souls doomed of old
To a mild purgatory ;
But through noonlight and moonlight
The little fount tinkles
Its silver saints'-bells,
That no sprite ill-boding
May make his abode in
Those innocent dells.

IV.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
When the phebe scarce whistles
Once an hour to his fellow,
And, where red lilies flaunted,
Balloons from the thistles
Tell summer's disasters,
The butterflies yellow,
As caught in an eddy
Of air's silent ocean,
Sink, waver, and steady
O'er goats'-beard and asters,
Like souls of dead flowers,
With aimless emotion
Still lingering unready
To leave their old bowers ;
And the fount is no dumber,
But still gleams and flashes,
And gurgles and splashes,
To the measure of summer ;

The butterflies hear it,
And spell-bound are holden,
Still balancing near it
O'er the goats'-beard so golden.

V.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
A vast silver willow,
I know not how planted,
(This wood is enchanted,
And full of surprises,)
Stands steinming a billow,
A motionless billow
Of ankle-deep mosses ;
Two great roots it crosses
To make a round basin,
And there the Fount rises ;
Ah, too pure a mirror
For one sick of error
To see his sad face in !
No dew-drop is still'er
In its lupin-leaf setting
Than this water moss-bounded ;
But a tiny sand-pillar
From the bottom keeps jetting,
And mermaid ne'er sounded
Through the wreaths of a shell,
Down amid crimson dulces
In some dell of ocean,
A melody sweeter
Than the delicate pulses,
The soft, noiseless metre
The pause and the swell
Of that musical motion :
I recall it, not see it ;
Could vision be clearer ?
Half I 'm fain to draw nearer
Half tempted to flee it ;
The sleeping Past wake not,
Beware !
One forward step take not,
Ah ! break not
That quietude rare !
By my step unaffrighted
A thrush hops before it,
And o'er it
A birch hangs delighted,
Dipping, dipping, dipping its tremu-
lous hair ;
Pure as the fountain, once
I came to the place,
(How dare I draw nearer ?)
I bent o'er its mirror,

And saw a child's face
'Mid locks of bright gold in it ;
Yes, pure as this fountain once, —
Since, how much error !
Too holy a mirror
For the man to behold in it
His harsh, bearded countenance !

VI.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
Ah, fly unreturning !
Yet stay ; —
'T is a woodland enchanted,
Where wonderful chances
Have sway ;
Luck flees from the cold one
But leaps to the bold one
Half-way ;
Why should I be daunted ?
Still the smooth mirror glances,
Still the amber sand dances,
One look, — then away !
O magical glass !
Canst keep in thy bosom
Shades of leaf and of blossom
When summer days pass,
So that when thy wave hardens
It shapes as it pleases,
Unharm'd by the breezes,
Its fine hanging gardens ?
Hast those in thy keeping,
And canst not uncover,
Enchantedly sleeping,
The old shade of thy lover ?
It is there ! I have found it !
He wakes, the long sleeper !
The pool is grown deeper,
'The sand dance is ending,
The white floor sinks, blending
With skies that below me
Are deepening and bending,
And a child's face alone
That seems not to know me,
With hair that fades golden
In the heaven-glow round it,
Looks up at my own ;
Ah, glimpse through the portal
That leads to the throne,
That opes the child's olden
Regions Elysian !
Ah, too holy vision
For thy skirts to be holden
By soiled hand of mortal !

It wavers, it scatters,
 'T is gone past recalling !
 A tear's sudden falling
 The magic cup shatters,
 Breaks the spell of the waters,
 And the sand cone once more,
 With a ceaseless renewing,
 Its dance is pursuing
 On the silvery floor,
 O'er and o'er,
 With a noiseless and ceaseless renew-
 ing.

VII.

'T is a woodland enchanted !
 If you ask me, *Where is it ?*
 I only can answer,
 'T is past my disclosing ;
 Not to choice is it granted
 By sure paths to visit
 The still pool enclosing
 Its blithe little dancer :
 But in some day, the rarest
 Of many Septembers,
 When the pulses of air rest,
 And all things lie dreaming
 In drowsy haze steaming
 From the wood's glowing embers,
 Then, sometimes, unheeding,
 And asking not whither,
 By a sweet inward leading
 My feet are drawn thither,
 And, looking with awe in the magical
 mirror,
 I see through my tears,
 Half doubtful of seeing,
 The face unperverted,
 The warm golden being
 Of a child of five years ;
 And spite of the mists and the error,
 And the days overcast,
 Can feel that I walk undeserted,
 But forever attended
 By the glad heavens that bended
 O'er the innocent past ;
 Toward fancy or truth
 Doth the sweet vision win me ?
 Dare I think that I cast
 In the fountain of youth
 The fleeting reflection
 Of some bygone perfection
 That still lingers in me ?

YUSSOUF.

A STRANGER came one night to Yus-
 souf's tent,
 Saying, " Behold one outcast and in
 dread,
 Against whose life the bow of power is
 bent,
 Who flies, and hath not where to lay
 his head ;
 I come to thee for shelter and for food,
 To Yussouf, called through all our tribes
 "The Good."

" This tent is mine," said Yussouf,
 " but no more
 Than it is God's ; come in, and be at
 peace ;
 Freely shalt thou partake of all my store
 As I of His who buildeth over these
 Our tents his glorious roof of night and
 day,
 And at whose door none ever yet heard
 Nay."

So Yussouf entertained his guest that
 night,
 And, waking him ere day, said : " Here
 is gold,
 My swiftest horse is saddled for thy
 flight,
 Depart before the prying day grow
 bold."
 As one lamp lights another, nor grows
 less,
 So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

That inward light the stranger's face
 made grand,
 Which shines from all self-conquest ;
 kneeling low,
 He bowed his forehead upon Yussouf's
 hand,
 Sobbing : " O Sheik, I cannot leave
 thee so ;
 I will repay thee ; all this thou hast
 done
 Unto that Ibrahim who slew thy son !"

" Take thrice the gold," said Yussouf,
 " for with thee
 Into the desert, never to return,
 My one black thought shall ride away
 from me ;

First-born, for whom by day and night
 I yearn,
 Balanced and just are all of God's de-
 crees ;
 Thou art avenged, my first-born, sleep
 in peace ! ”

THE DARKENED MIND.

THE fire is burning clear and blithely,
 Pleasantly whistles the winter wind ;
 We are about thee, thy friends and
 kindred,
 On us all flickers the firelight kind ;
 There thou sittest in thy wonted corner
 Lone and awful in thy darkened mind.

There thou sittest ; now and then thou
 moanest ;
 Thou dost talk with what we cannot see,
 Lookest at us with an eye so doubtful,
 It doth put us very far from thee ;
 There thou sittest ; we would fain be
 nigh thee,
 But we know that it can never be.

We can touch thee, still we are no
 nearer ;
 Gather round thee, still thou art alone ;
 The wide chasm of reason is between us ;
 Thou confutest kindness with a moan ;
 We can speak to thee, and thou canst
 answer,
 Like two prisoners through a wall of
 stone.

Hardest heart would call it very awful
 When thou look'st at us and seest — O
 what ?

If we move away, thou sittest gazing
 With those vague eyes at the selfsame
 spot,
 And thou mutterest, thy hands thou
 wringest,
 Seeing something, — us thou seest not.

Strange it is that, in this open bright-
 ness,

Thou shouldst sit in such a narrow cell ;
 Strange it is that thou shouldst be so
 lonesome

Where those are who love thee all so
 well ;

Not so much of thee is left among us
 As the hum outliving the hushed bell.

WHAT RABBI JEHOSHA SAID.

RABBI JEHOSHA used to say
 That God made angels every day,
 Perfect as Michael and the rest
 First brooded in creation's nest,
 Whose only office was to cry
Hosanna! once, and then to die ;
 Or rather, with Life's essence blent,
 'T' to be led home from banishment.

Rabbi Jehosha had the skill
 To know that Heaven is in God's will ;
 And doing that, though for a space
 One heart-beat long, may win a grace
 As full of grandeur and of glow
 As Princes of the Chariot know.

'T were glorious, no doubt, to be
 One of the strong-winged Hierarchy,
 To burn with Seraphs, or to shine
 With Cherubs, deathlessly divine ;
 Yet I, perhaps, poor earthly clod,
 Could I forget myself in God,
 Could I but find my nature's clew
 Simply as birds and blossoms do,
 And but for one rapt moment know
 'T is Heaven must come, not we must
 go,

Should win my place as near the throne
 As the pearl-angel of its zone,
 And God would listen 'mid the throng
 For my one breath of perfect song,
 That, in its simple human way,
 Said all the Host of Heaven could say.

ALL-SAINTS.

ONE feast, of holy days the crest,
 I, though no Churchman, love to
 keep,
 All-Saints, — the unknown good that
 rest

In God's still memory folded deep ;
 The bravely dumb that did their deed,
 And scorned to blot it with a name,
 Men of the plain heroic breed,
 That loved Heaven's silence more
 than fame.

Such lived not in the past alone,
 But thread to-day the unheeding
 street,

And stairs to Sin and Famine known
Sing with the welcome of their feet ;
The den they enter grows a shrine,
The grimy sash an oriel burns,
Their cup of water warms like wine,
Their speech is filled from heavenly
urns.

About their brows to me appears
An aureole traced in tenderest light,
The rainbow-gleam of smiles through
tears
In dying eyes, by them made bright,
Of souls that shivered on the edge
Of that chill ford repassed no more,
And in their mercy felt the pledge
And sweetness of the farther shore.

A WINTER-EVENING HYMN
TO MY FIRE.

I.

BEAUTY on my hearth-stone blazing !
To-night the triple Zoroaster
Shall my prophet be and master :
To-night will I pure Magian be,
Hymns to thy sole honor raising,
While thou leapest fast and faster,
Wild with self-delighted glee,
Or sink'st low and glowest faintly
As an aureole still and saintly,
Keeping cadence to my praising
Thee ! still thee ! and only thee !

II.

Elfish daughter of Apollo !
Thee, from thy father stolen and bound
To serve in Vulcan's clangorous smithy
Prometheus (primal Yankee) found,
And, when he had tampered with thee,
(Too confiding little maid !)
In a reed's precarious hollow
To our frozen earth conveyed :
For he swore I know not what ;
Endless ease should be thy lot,
Pleasure that should never falter,
Life-long play, and not a duty
Save to hover o'er the altar,
Vision of celestial beauty,
Fed with precious woods and spices,
Then, perfidious ! having got
Thee in the net of his devices,

Sold thee into endless slavery,
Made thee a drudge to boil the pot,
Thee, Helios' daughter, who dost bear
His likeness in thy golden hair ;
Thee, by nature wild and wondrous
Palpitating, evanescent
As the shade of Dian's crescent
Life, motion, gladness, every where !

III.

Fathom deep men bury thee
In the furnace dark and still,
There, with dreariest mockery,
Making thee eat, against thy will,
Blackest Pennsylvanian stone ;
But thou dost avenge thy doom,
For, from out thy catacomb,
Day and night thy wrath is blown
In a withering simoom,
And, adown that cavern drear,
Thy black pitfall in the floor,
Staggers the lusty antique cheer,
Despairing, and is seen no more !

IV.

Elfish I may rightly name thee ;
We enslave, but cannot tame thee ;
With fierce snatches, now and then,
Thou pluckest at thy right again,
And thy down-trod instincts savage
To stealthy insurrection creep,
While thy wittol masters sleep,
And burst in undiscerning ravage ;
Then how thou shak'st thy bacchant
locks !

While brazen pulses, far and near,
Throb thick and thicker wild with fear
And dread conjecture, till the drear
Disordered clangor every steeple rocks !

V.

But when we make a friend of thee,
And admit thee to the hall
On our nights of festival,
Then, Cinderella, who could see
In thee the kitchen's stunted thrall ?
Once more a Princess lithe and tall,
Thou dancest with a whispering tread,
While the bright marvel of thy head
In crinkling gold floats all abroad,
And gloriously dost vindicate
The legend of thy lineage great,
Earth-exiled daughter of the Pythian
god !

Now in the ample chimney-place,
To honor thy acknowledged race,
We crown thee high with laurel good,
Thy shining father's sacred wood,
Which, guessing thy ancestral right,
Sparkles and snaps his dumb delight,
And, at thy touch, poor outcast one,
Feels through his gladdened fibres go
The tingle and thrill and vassal glow
Of instincts loyal to the sun.

VI.

O thou of home the guardian Lar,
And, when our earth hath wandered far
Into the cold, and deep snow covers
The walks of our New England lovers,
Their sweet secluded evening-star!

'T was with thy rays the English Muse
Ripened her mild domestic hues;

'T was by thy flicker that she conned
The fireside wisdom that enrings
With light from heaven familiar things;
By thee she found the homely faith
In whose mild eyes thy comfort stay'th,
When Death, extinguishing his torch,
Gropes for the latch-string in the porch;
The love that wanders not beyond
His earliest nest, but sits and sings
While children smooth his patient
wings;

Therefore with thee I love to read
Our brave old poets: at thy touch how
stirs

Life in the withered words! how swift
recede

Time's shadows! and how glows again
Through its dead mass the incandes-
cent verse,

As when upon the anvils of the brain
It glittering lay, cyclopically wrought
By the fast-throbbing hammers of the
poet's thought!

Thou murmurest, too, divinely stirred,
The aspirations unattained,
The rhythms so rathe and delicate,
They bent and strained
And broke, beneath the sombre weight
Of any airiest mortal word.

VII.

What warm protection dost thou bend
Round curtain'd talk of friend with
friend,

While the gray snow-storm, held aloof,
To softest outline rounds the roof,
Or the rude North with baffled strain
Shoulders the frost-starred window-
pane!

Now the kind nymph to Bacchus borne
By Morpheus' daughter, she that seems
Gifted upon her natal morn

By him with fire, by her with dreams,
Nicotia, dearer to the Muse
Than all the grapes' bewildering juice,
We worship, unforbid of thee;

And, as her incense floats and curls
In airy spires and wayward whirrs,
Or poises on its tremulous stalk
A flower of frailest revery,
So winds and loiters, idly free,
The current of unguided talk,
Now laughter-rippled, and now caught
In smooth, dark pools of deeper
thought.

Meanwhile thou mellowest every word,
A sweetly unobtrusive third;

For thou hast magic beyond wine,
'To unlock natures each to each;
The unspoken thought thou canst di-
vine;

Thou fillest the pauses of the speech
With whispers that to dream-land reach
And frozen fancy-springs unchain
In Arctic outskirts of the brain;
Sun of all inmost confidences!
To thy rays doth the heart unclose
Its formal calyx of pretences,
That close against rude day's offences,
And open its shy midnight rose.

VIII.

Thou holdest not the master key
With which thy Sire sets free the mys-
tic gates

Of Past and Future: not for common
fates

Do they wide open fling,
And, with a far-heard ring,
Swing back their willing valves melo-
diously;

Only to ceremonial days,
And great processions of imperial song
'That set the world at gaze,
Doth such high privilege belong:
But thou a postern-door canst ope
To humbler chambers of the selfsame
palace

Where Memory lodges, and her sister
 Hope,
 Whose being is but as a crystal chalice
 Which, with her various mood, the
 elder fills
 Of joy or sorrow,
 So coloring as she wills
 With hues of yesterday the unconscious
 morrow.

IX.

Thou sinkest, and my fancy sinks with
 thee :

For thee I took the idle shell,
 And struck the unused chords again,
 But they are gone who listened well ;
 Some are in heaven, and all are far
 from me :

Even as I sing, it turns to pain,
 And with vain tears my eyelids throb
 and swell :

Enough ; I come not of the race
 That hawk their sorrows in the market-
 place.

Earth stops the ears I best had loved
 to please ;

Then break, ye untuned chords, or rust
 in peace !

As if a white-haired actor should come
 back

Some midnight to the theatre void and
 black,

And there rehearse his youth's great
 part

'Mid thin applauses of the ghosts,
 So seems it now : ye crowd upon my
 heart,

And I bow down in silence, shadowy
 hosts !

FANCY'S CASUISTRY.

How struggles with the tempest's
 swells

That warning of tumultuous bells !

The fire is loose ! and frantic knells

Throb fast and faster,

As tower to tower confusedly tells

News of disaster.

But on my far-off solitude

No harsh alarms can intrude ;

The terror comes to me subdued
 And charmed by distance,
 'To deepen the habitual mood
 Of my existence.

Are those, I muse, the Easter chimes ?
 And listen, weaving careless rhymes
 While the loud city's griefs and crimes
 Pay gentle allegiance
 To the fine quiet that sublimes
 These dreamy regions.

And when the storm o'erwhelms the
 shore,

I watch entranced as, o'er and o'er,
 The light revolves amid the roar

So still and saintly,

Now large and near, now more and
 more

Withdrawing faintly.

This, too, despairing sailors see
 Flash out the breakers 'neath their lee
 In sudden snow, then lingeringly

Wane tow'rd eclipse,

While through the dark the shuddering
 sea

Gropes for the ships.

And is it right, this mood of mind

That thus, in revery enshrined,

Can in the world mere topics find

For musing stricture,

Seeing the life of humankind

Only as picture ?

The events in line of battle go ;

In vain for me their trumpets blow

As unto him that lieth low

In death's dark arches,

And through the sod hears throbbing
 slow

The muffled marches.

O Duty, am I dead to thee

In this my cloistered ecstasy,

In this lone shallop on the sea

That drifts tow'rd Silence ?

And are those visioned shores I see

But sirens' islands ?

My Dante frowns with lip-locked mien,

As who would say, "'T is those, I ween,

Whom lifelong armor-chafe makes lean

That win the laurel " ;

But where *is* Truth? What does it
mean,
The world-old quarrel?

Such questionings are idle air :
Leave what to do and what to spare
To the inspiring moment's care,
Nor ask for payment
Of fame or gold, but just to wear
Unspotted raiment.

TO MR. JOHN BARTLETT,

WHO HAD SENT ME A SEVEN-POUND
TROUT.

FIT for an Abbot of Theleme,
For the whole Cardinals' College,
or
The Pope himself to see in dream
Before his lenten vision gleam,
He lies there, the sogdologer !

His precious flanks with stars besprent,
Worthy to swim in Castaly !
The friend by whom such gifts are sent,
For him shall bumpers full be spent,
His health ! be Luck his fast ally !

I see him trace the wayward brook
Amid the forest mysteries,
Where at their shades shy aspens look,
Or where, with many a gurgling crook,
It croons its woodland histories.

I see leaf-shade and sun-fleck lend
Their tremulous, sweet vicissitude
To smooth, dark pool, to crinkling
bend, —
(O, stew him, Ann, as 't were your
friend,
With amorous solicitude !)

I see him step with caution due,
Soft as if shod with moccasins,
Grave as in church, for who plies you,
Sweet craft, is safe as in a pew
From all our common stock o' sins.

The unerring fly I see him cast,
That as a rose-leaf falls as soft,
A flash ! a whirl ! he has him fast !
We tyros, how that struggle last
Confuses and appalls us oft.

Unflattered he : calm as the sky
Looks on our tragi-comedies,
This way and that he lets him fly,
A sunbeam-shuttle, then to die
Lands him, with cool *aplomb*, at
ease.

The friend who gave our board such
gust,
Life's care may he o'erstep it half,
And, when Death hooks him, as he
must,
He 'll do it handsomely, I trust,
And John H—— write his epi-
taph !

O, born beneath the Fishes' sign,
Of constellations happiest,
May he somewhere with Walton dine,
May Horace send him Massic wine,
And Burns Scotch drink, the nap-
piest !

And when they come his deeds to
weigh,
And how he used the talents his,
One trout-scale in the scales he 'll lay
(If trout had scales), and 't will out-
sway
The wrong side of the balances.

ODE TO HAPPINESS.

SPIRIT, that rarely comest now
And only to contrast my gloom,
Like rainbow-feathered birds that
bloom

A moment on some autumn bough
That, with the spurn of their farewell,
Sheds its last leaves, — thou once didst
dwell

With me year-long, and make in-
tense
To boyhood's wisely vacant days
Their fleet but all-sufficing grace
Of trustful inexperience.

While soul could still transfigure
sense,
And thrill, as with love's first caress,
At life's mere unexpectedness.
Days when my blood would leap and
run

As full of sunshine as a breeze,
 Or spray tossed up by Summer
 seas
 That doubts if it be sea or sun !
 Days that flew swiftly like the band
 That played in Grecian games at
 strife,
 And passed from eager hand to hand
 The onward-dancing torch of life !

Wing-footed ! thou abid'st with him
 Who asks it not ; but he who hath
 Watched o'er the waves thy waning
 path,
 Shall nevermore behold returning
 Thy high-heaped canvas shoreward
 yearning !
 Thou first reveal'st to us thy face
 Turned o'er the shoulder's parting
 grace,
 A moment glimpsed, then seen no
 more, —
 Thou whose swift footsteps we can
 trace
 Away from every mortal door.

Nymph of the unreturning feet,
 How may I win thee back ? But
 no,

I do thee wrong to call thee so ;
 'T is I am changed, not thou art fleet :
 The man thy presence feels again,
 Not in the blood, but in the brain,
 Spirit, that lov'st the upper air
 Serene and passionless and rare,
 Such as on mountain heights we
 find
 And wide-viewed uplands of the
 mind ;

Or such as scorns to coil and sing
 Round any but the eagle's wing
 Of souls that with long upward beat
 Have won an undisturbed retreat
 Where, poised like winged victories,
 They mirror in relentless eyes
 The life broad-basking 'neath their
 feet, —

Man ever with his Now at strife,
 Pained with first gasps of earthly
 air,
 Then praying Death the last to
 spare,
 Still fearful of the ampler life.

Not unto them dost thou consent
 Who, passionless, can lead at ease
 A life of unalloyed content
 A life like that of land-locked seas,
 That feel no elemental gush
 Of tidal forces, no fierce rush
 Of storm deep-grasping scarcely
 spent

'Twixt continent and continent.
 Such quiet souls have never known
 Thy truer inspiration, thou
 Who lov'st to feel upon thy brow
 Spray from the plunging vessel thrown
 Grazing the tusked lee shore, the cliff
 That o'er the abrupt gorge holds its
 breath,

Where the frail hair-breadth of an *if*
 Is all that sunders life and death :
 These, too, are cared-for, and round
 these

Bends her mild crook thy sister Peace ;
 These in unvexed dependence lie,
 Each 'neath his strip of household
 sky ;

O'er these clouds wander, and the blue
 Hangs motionless the whole day
 through ;

Stars rise for them, and moons grow
 large

And lessen in such tranquil wise
 As joys and sorrows do that rise
 Within their nature's sheltered
 marge ;

Their hours into each other fit
 Like the leaf-shadows of the vine
 And fig-tree under which they sit,
 And their still lives to heaven incline
 With an unconscious habitude,
 Unhistoried as smokes that rise
 From happy hearths and sight elude
 In kindred blue of morning skies.

Wayward ! when once we feel thy lack,
 'T is worse than vain to woo thee back !

Yet there is one who seems to be
 Thine elder sister, in whose eyes
 A faint far northern light will rise
 Sometimes, and bring a dream of
 thee ;

She is not that for which youth hoped,
 But she hath blessings all her own.
 Thoughts pure as lilies newly oped,
 And faith to sorrow given alone :
 Almost I deem that it is thou

Come back with graver matron brow,
With deepened eyes and bated breath,
Like one that somewhere hath met
Death,

But "No," she answers, "I am she
Whom the gods love, Tranquillity :

That other whom you seek forlorn
Half earthly was ; but I am born
Of the immortals, and our race

Wear still some sadness on our face :

He wins me late, but keeps me long,
Who, dowered with every gift of pas-
sion,

In that fierce flame can forge and fash-
ion

Of sin and self the anchor strong ;
Can thence compel the driving force
Of daily life's mechanic course,
Nor less the nobler energies
Of needful toil and culture wise ;
Whose soul is worth the tempter's lure
Who can renounce, and yet endure,
To him I come, not lightly wooed,
But won by silent fortitude."

VILLA FRANCA.

1859.

WAIT a little : do *we* not wait ?
Louis Napoleon is not Fate,
Francis Joseph is not Time ;
There's One hath swifter feet than
Crime :

Cannon-parliaments settle naught ;
Venice is Austria's, — whose is
Thought ?

Minié is good, but, spite of change,
Gutenberg's gun has the longest range.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

Wait, we say : our years are long ;
Men are weak, but Man is strong ;
Since the stars first curved their rings,
We have looked on many things ;
Great wars come and great wars go,
Wolf-tracks light on polar snow ;
We shall see him come and gone,

This second-hand Napoleon.

Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

We saw the elder Corsican,
And Clotho muttered as she span,
While crowned lackeys bore the train,
Of the pinchbeck Charlemagne :

"Sister, stint not length of thread !

Sister, stay the scissors dread !
On Saint Helen's granite bleak,
Hark, the vulture whets his beak !"

Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

The Bonapartes, we know their bees
That wade in honey red to the knees ;
Their patent reaper, its sheaves sleep
sound

In dreamless garners underground :
We know false glory's spendthrift race
Pawning nations for feathers and lace ;
It may be short, it may be long,

"'T is reckoning-day !" sneers unpaid
Wrong.

Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

The Cock that wears the Eagle's skin
Can promise what he ne'er could win ;
Slavery reaped for fine words sown,
System for all, and rights for none,
Despots atop, a wild clan below,
Such is the Gaul from long ago ;
Wash the black from the Ethiop's
face,

Wash the past out of man or race !

Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !

Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !

In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

'Neath Gregory's throne a spider
swings,

And snares the people for the kings ;

“ Luther is dead ; old quarrels pass ;
The stake’s black scars are healed with
grass ” ;

So dreamers prate ; did man e’er live
Saw priest or woman yet forgive ?
But Luther’s broom is left, and eyes
Peep o’er their creeds to where it lies.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !
Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !
In the shadow, year out, year in,
The silent headsman waits forever.

Smooth sails the ship of either realm,
Kaiser and Jesuit at the helm ;
We look down the depths, and mark
Silent workers in the dark
Building slow the sharp-tusked reefs,
Old instincts hardening to new beliefs ;
Patience a little ; learn to wait ;
Hours are long on the clock of Fate.
Spin, spin, Clotho, spin !
Lachesis, twist ! and Atropos,
sever !
Darkness is strong, and so is Sin,
But only God endures forever !

THE MINER.

Down ’mid the tangled roots of things
That coil about the central fire,
I seek for that which giveth wings
To stoop, not soar, to my desire.

Sometimes I hear, as ’t were a sigh,
The sea’s deep yearning far above,
“ Thou hast the secret not,” I cry,
“ In deeper deeps is hid my Love.”

They think I burrow from the sun,
In darkness, all alone, and weak ;
Such loss were gain if He were won,
For ’t is the sun’s own Sun I seek.

“ The earth,” they murmur, “ is the
tomb
That vainly sought his life to prison ;
Why grovel longer in the gloom ?
He is not here ; he hath arisen.”

More life for me where he hath lain
Hidden while ye believed him dead,

Than in cathedrals cold and vain,
Built on loose sands of *It is said*.

My search is for the living gold ;
Him I desire who dwells recluse,
And not his image worn and old,
Day-servant of our sordid use.

If him I find not, yet I find
The ancient joy of cell and church,
The glimpse, the surety undefined,
The unquenched ardor of the search.

Happier to chase a flying goal
Than to sit counting laurelled gains,
To guess the Soul within the soul
Than to be lord of what remains.

Hide still, best Good, in subtile wise,
Beyond my nature’s utmost scope ;
Be ever absent from mine eyes
To be twice present in my hope !

GOLD EGG : A DREAM-FAN- TASY.

HOW A STUDENT IN SEARCH OF THE
BEAUTIFUL FELL ASLEEP IN DRES-
DEN OVER HERR PROFESSOR DOCTOR
VISCHER’S WISSENSCHAFT DES SCHÖ-
NEN, AND WHAT CAME THEREOF.

I SWAM with undulation soft,
Adrift on Vischer’s ocean,
And, from my cockpit up aloft,
Sent down my mental plummet oft
In hope to reach a notion.

But from the metaphysic sea
No bottom was forthcoming,
And all the while (how drearily !)
In one eternal note of B
My German stove kept humming.

“ What’s Beauty ? ” mused I ; “ is it
told
By synthesis ? analysis ?
Have you not made us lead of gold ?
To feed your crucible, not sold
Our temple’s sacred chalices ? ”

Then o'er my senses came a change ;
 My book seemed all traditions,
 Old legends of profoundest range,
 Diabliery, and stories strange
 Of goblins, elves, magicians.

Old gods in modern saints I found,
 Old creeds in strange disguises ;
 I thought them safely underground,
 And here they were, all safe and sound,
 Without a sign of phthisis.

Truth was, my outward eyes were
 closed,
 Although I did not know it ;
 Deep into dream-land I had dozed,
 And so was happily transposed
 From proser into poet.

So what I read took flesh and blood,
 And turned to living creatures :
 The words were but the dingy bud
 That bloomed, like Adam, from the
 mud,
 To human forms and features.

I saw how Zeus was lodged once more
 By Baucis and Philemon ;
 The text said, " Not alone of yore,
 But every day, at every door,
 Knocks still the masking Demon."

DAIMON 't was printed in the book,
 And, as I read it slowly,
 The letters stirred and changed, and
 took
 Jove's stature, the Olympian look
 Of painless melancholy.

He paused upon the threshold worn :
 " With coin I cannot pay you ;
 Yet would I fain make some return ;
 The gift for cheapness do not spurn,
 Accept this hen, I pray you.

" Plain feathers wears my Hemera,
 And has from ages olden ;
 She makes her nest in common hay,
 And yet, of all the birds that lay,
 Her eggs alone are golden."

He turned, and could no more be seen ;
 Old Baucis stared a moment,
 Then tossed poor Parilet on the green,
 And with a tone, half jest, half spleen,
 Thus made her housewife's comment :

" The stranger had a queerish face,
 His smile was hardly pleasant,
 And, though he meant it for a grace,
 Yet this old hen of barnyard race
 Was but a stingy present.

" She 's quite too old for laying eggs,
 Nay, even to make a soup of ;
 One only needs to see her legs, —
 You might as well boil down the pegs
 I made the brood-hen's coop of !

" Some eighteen score of such do I
 Raise every year, her sisters ;
 Go, in the woods your fortunes try,
 All day for one poor earthworm pry,
 And scratch your toes to blisters !"

Philemon found the rede was good,
 And, turning on the poor hen,
 He clapt his hands, and stamped, and
 shooed,
 Hunting the exile tow'rd the wood,
 To house with snipe and moor-hen.

A poet saw and cried : " Hold ! hold !
 What are you doing, madman ?
 Spurn you more wealth than can be told,
 The fowl that lays the eggs of gold,
 Because she 's plainly clad, man ?"

To him Philemon : " I 'll not balk
 Thy will with any shackle :
 Wilt add a burden to thy walk ?
 There ! take her without further talk ;
 You 're both but fit to cackle !"

But scarce the poet touched the bird,
 It swelled to stature regal ;
 And when her cloud-wide wings she
 stirred,
 A whisper as of doom was heard,
 'T was Jove's bolt-bearing eagle.

As when from far-off cloud-bergs
 springs
 A crag, and, hurthng under,
 From cliff to cliff the rumor flings,
 So she from flight-foreboding wings
 Shook out a innumurous thunder.

She gripped the poet to her breast.
 And, ever upward soaring,
 Earth seemed a new moon in the west.

And then one light among the rest
Where squadrons lie at mooring.

How tell to what heaven-hallowed seat
The eagle bent his courses?
The waves that on its bases beat,
The gales that round it weave and fleet,
Are life's creative forces.

Here was the bird's primeval nest,
High on a promontory
Star-pharosed, where she takes her rest
To brood new æons 'neath her breast,
The future's unfledged glory.

I know not how, but I was there
All feeling, hearing, seeing;
It was not wind that stirred my hair
But living breath, the essence rare
Of unembodied being.

And in the nest an egg of gold
Lay soft in self-made lustre;
Gazing whereon, what depths untold
Within, what marvels manifold,
Seemed silently to muster!

Daily such splendors to confront
Is still to me and you sent?
It glowed as when Saint Peter's front,
Illumed, forgets its stony wont,
And seems to thro' translucent.

One saw therein the life of man,
(Or so the poet found it,)
The yolk and white, conceive who can,
Were the glad earth, that, floating, span
In the glad heaven around it.

I knew this as one knows in dream,
Where no effects to causes
Are chained as in our work-day scheme,
And then was wakened by a scream
That seemed to come from Baucis.

"Bless Zeus!" she cried, "I'm safe
below!"
First pale, then red as coral;
And I, still drowsy, pondered slow,
And seemed to find, but hardly know,
Something like this for moral.

Each day the world is born anew
For him who takes it rightly;

Not fresher that which Adam knew,
Not sweeter that whose moonlit dew
Entranced Arcadia nightly.

Rightly? That's simply: 't is to see
Some substance casts these shadows
Which we call Life and History,
That aimless seem to chase and flee
Like wind-gleams over meadows.

Simply? That's nobly: 't is to know
That God may still be met with,
Nor groweth old, nor doth bestow
These senses fine, this brain aglow,
To grovel and forget with.

Beauty, Herr Doctor, trust in me,
No chemistry will win you;
Charis still rises from the sea;
If you can't find her, *might* it be
Because you seek within you?

A FAMILIAR EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

ALIKE I hate to be your debtor,
Or write a mere perfunctory letter;
For letters, so it seems to me,
Our careless quintessence should be,
Our real nature's truant play
When Consciousness looks t' other
way,

Not drop by drop, with watchful skill,
Gathered in Art's deliberate still,
But life's insensible completeness
Got as the ripe grape gets its sweet-
ness,

As if it had a way to fuse
The golden sunlight into juice.
Hopeless my mental pump I try;
The boxes hiss, the tube is dry;
As those petroleum wells that spout
Awhile like M. C.'s then give out,
My spring, once full as Arethusa,
Is a mere bore as dry's Creusa;
And yet you ask me why I'm glum,
And why my graver Muse is dumb.
Ah me! I've reasons manifold
Condensed in one, — I'm getting old!

When life, once past its fortieth year,
Wheels up its evening hemisphere,

The mind's own shadow, which the
 boy
 Saw onward point to hope and joy,
 Shifts round, irrevocably set
 Tow'rd morning's loss and vain re-
 gret,
 And, argue with it as we will,
 The clock is unconverted still.

"But count the gains," I hear you
 say,

"Which far the seeming loss out-
 weigh ;

Friendships built firm 'gainst flood and
 wind

On rock-foundations of the mind ;
 Knowledge instead of scheming hope ;
 For wild adventure, settled scope ;
 Talents, from surface-ore profuse,
 Tempered and edged to tools for use ;
 Judgment, for passion's headlong
 whirls ;

Old sorrows crystallised into pearls ;
 Losses by patience turned to gains,
 Possessions now, that once were pains ;
 Joy's blossom gone, as go it must,
 To ripen seeds of faith and trust ;
 Why heed a snow-flake on the roof
 If fire within keep Age aloof
 Though blundering north-winds push
 and strain

With palms benumbed against the
 pane ?"

My dear old Friend, you 're very wise ;
 We always are with others' eyes,
 And see *so* clear ! (our neighbor's deck
 on)

What reef the idiot 's sure to wreck on ;
 Folks when they learn how life has
 quizzed 'em

Are fain to make a shift with Wisdom,
 And, finding she nor breaks nor bends,
 Give her a letter to their friends.

Draw passion's torrent whose will
 Through sluices smooth to turn a mill,
 And, taking solid toll of grist,
 Forget the rainbow in the mist.

The exulting leap, the aimless haste
 Scattered in iridescent waste ;
 Prefer who likes the sure esteem
 To cheated youth's midsummer dream,
 When every friend was more than
 Damon,

Each quicksand safe to build a fame on ;
 Believe that prudence snug excels
 Youth's gross of verdant spectacles,
 Through which earth's withered stubble
 seen

Looks autumn-proof as painted green, —
 I side with Moses 'gainst the masses,
 Take you the drudge, give me the
 glasses !

And, for your talents shaped with prac-
 tice,

Convince me first that such the fact is ;
 Let whoso likes be beat, poor fool,
 On life's hard stithy to a tool,
 Be whoso will a ploughshare made,
 Let me remain a jolly blade !

What's Knowledge, with her stocks
 and lands,

To gay Conjecture's yellow strands ?
 What's watching her slow flocks in-
 crease

To ventures for the golden fleece ?
 What her deep ships, safe under lee,
 To youth's light craft, that drinks the
 sea,

For Flying Islands making sail,
 And failing where 't is gain to fail ?
 Ah me ! Experience (so we 're told),
 Time's crucible, turns lead to gold ;
 Yet what's experience won but dross,
 Cloud-gold transmuted to our loss ?
 What but base coin the best event
 To the untried experiment ?

'T was an old couple, says the poet,
 That lodged the gods and did not know
 it ;

Youth sees and knows them as they
 were

Before Olympus' top was bare ;
 From Swampscot's flats his eye divine
 Sees Venus rocking on the brine,
 With lucent limbs, that somehow scat-
 ter a

Charm that turns Doll to Cleopatra ;
 Bacchus (that now is scarce induced
 To give Eld's lagging blood a boost),
 With cymbals' clang and pards to draw
 him,

Divine as Ariadne saw him,
 Storms through Youth's pulse with all
 his train

And wins new Indies in his brain ;

Apollo (with the old a trope,
A sort of finer Mister Pope),
Apollo — but the Muse forbids ;
At his approach cast down thly lids,
And think it joy enough to hear
Far off his arrows singing clear ;
He knows enough who silent knows
The quiver chiming as he goes ;
He tells too much who e'er betrays
The shining Archer's secret ways.

Dear Friend, you're right and I am
wrong ;

My quibbles are not worth a song,
And I sophistically tease
My fancy sad to tricks like these.
I could not cheat you if I would ;
You know me and my jesting mood,
Mere surface-foam, for pride concealing
The purpose of my deeper feeling.
I have not spilt one drop of joy
Poured in the senses of the boy,
Nor Nature fails my walks to bless
With all her golden inwardness ;
And as blind nestlings, unafraid,
Stretch up wide-mouthed to every shade
By which their downy dream is stirred,
Taking it for the mother-bird,
So, when God's shadow, which is light,
Unheralded, by day or night,
My wakening instincts falls across,
Silent as sunbeams over moss,
In my heart's nest half-conscious things
Stir with a helpless sense of wings,
Lift themselves up, and tremble long
With premonitions sweet of song.

Be patient, and perhaps (who knows?)
These may be winged one day like
those ;

If thrushes, close-embowered to sing,
Pierced through with June's delicious
singing ;

If swallows, their half-hour to run
Star-breasted in the setting sun.
At first they're but the unfledged
proem,

Or songless schedule of a poem ;
When from the shell they're hardly dry
If some folks thrust them forth, must I?

But let me end with a comparison
Never yet hit upon by e'er a son
Of our American Apollo,

(And there's where I shall beat them
hollow,

If he is not a courtly St. John,
But, as West said, a Mohawk Injun.)
A poem's like a cruise for whales :
Through untried seas the hunter sails,
His prow dividing waters known
To the blue iceberg's hulk alone ;
At last, on farthest edge of day,
He marks the smoky puff of spray ;
Then with bent oars the shallop flies
To where the basking quarry lies ;
Then the excitement of the strife,
The crimsoned waves, — ah, this is life !

But, the dead plunder once secured
And safe beside the vessel moored,
All that had stirred the blood before
Is so much blubber, nothing more,
(I mean no pun, nor image so
Mere sentimental verse, you know,)
And all is tedium, smoke, and soil,
In trying-out the noisome oil.

Yes, this *is* life ! And so the bard
Through briny deserts, never scarred
Since Noah's keel, a subject seeks,
And lies upon the watch for weeks ;
That once harpooned and helpless lying,
What follows is but weary trying.

Now I've a notion, if a poet
Beat up for themes, his verse will show
it ;

I wait for subjects that hunt me,
By day or night won't let me be,
And hang about me like a curse,
Till they have made me into verse,
From line to line my fingers tease
Beyond my knowledge, as the bees
Build no new cell till those before
With limpid summer-sweet run o'er ;
Then, if I neither sing nor shine,
Is it the subject's fault, or mine ?

AN EMBER PICTURE.

How strange are the freaks of memory !
The lessons of life we forget,
While a trifle, a trick of color,
In the wonderful web is set, —

Set by some mordant of fancy,
And, spite of the wear and tear
Of time or distance or trouble,
Insists on its right to be there.

A chance had brought us together ;
Our talk was of matters-of-course ;
We were nothing, one to the other,
But a short half-hour's resource.

We spoke of French acting and actors,
And their easy, natural way ;
Of the weather, for it was raining
As we drove home from the play.

We debated the social nothings
We bore ourselves so to discuss ;
The thunderous rumors of battle
Were silent the while for us.

Arrived at her door, we left her
With a drippingly hurried adieu,
And our wheels went crunching the
gravel
Of the oak-darkened avenue.

As we drove away through the shadow,
The candle she held in the door
From rain-varnished tree-trunk to tree-
trunk
Flashed fainter, and flashed no
more ; —

Flashed fainter, then wholly faded
Before we had passed the wood ;
But the light of the face behind it
Went with me and stayed for good.

The vision of scarce a moment,
And hardly marked at the time,
It comes unbidden to haunt me,
Like a scrap of ballad-rhyme.

Had she beauty? Well, not what they
call so ;
You may find a thousand as fair ;
And yet there 's her face in my memory
With no special claim to be there.

As I sit sometimes in the twilight,
And call back to life in the coals
Oid faces and hopes and fancies
Long buried, (good rest to their
souls !)

Her face shines out in the embers ;
I see her holding the light,
And hear the crunch of the gravel
And the sweep of the rain that night.

'T is a face that can never grow older.
That never can part with its gleam,
'T is a gracious possession forever,
For is it not all a dream ?

TO H. W. L.,

ON HIS BIRTHDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY.
1867.

I NEED not praise the sweetness of his
song,
Where limpid verse to limpid verse
succeeds
Smooth as our Charles, when, fearing
lest he wrong
The new moon's mirrored skiff, he
slides along,
Full without noise, and whispers in
his reeds.

With loving breath of all the winds his
name
Is blown about the world, but to his
friends
A sweeter secret hides behind his fame,
And Love steals shyly through the loud
acclaim
To murmur a *God bless you!* and
there ends.

As I muse backward up the checkered
years
Wherein so much was given, so much
was lost,
Blessings in both kinds, such as cheapen
tears, —
But hush ! this is not for profaner ears ;
Let them drink molten pearls nor
dream the cost.

Some suck up poison from a sorrow's
core,
As naught but nightshade grew upon
earth's ground ;
Love turned all his to heart's-ease, and
the more

Fate tried his bastions, she but forced
a door

Leading to sweeter manhood and
more sound.

Even as a wind-waved fountain's sway-
ing shade

Seems of mixed race, a gray wraith
shot with sun,

So through his trial faith translucent
rayed

Till darkness, half disnatured so, be-
trayed

A heart of sunshine that would fain
o'errun.

Surely if skill in song the shears may
stay

And of its purpose cheat the charmed
abyss,

If our poor life be lengthened by a lay,
He shall not go, although his presence
may,

And the next age in praise shall
double this.

Long days be his, and each as lusty-
sweet

As gracious natures find his song to
be ;

May Age steal on with softly-cadenced
feet

Falling in music, as for him were meet
Whose choicest verse is harsher-toned
than he !



THE NIGHTINGALE IN THE STUDY.

" COME forth ! " my catbird calls to me,
" And hear me sing a cavatina
That, in this old familiar tree,
Shall hang a garden of Alcina.

" These buttercups shall brim with wine
Beyond all Lesbian juice or Massic ;
May not New England be divine ?
My ode to ripening summer classic ?

" Or, if to me you will not hark,
By Beaver Brook a thrush is ringing
Till all the alder-coverts dark
Seem sunshine-dappled with his sing-
ing.

" Come out beneath the unmastered
sky,

With its emancipating spaces,
And learn to sing as well as I,
Without premeditated graces.

" What boot your many-volumed gains,
Those withered leaves forever turn-
ing,
To win, at best, for all your pains,
A nature mummy-wrapt in learning ?

" The leaves wherein true wisdom lies
On living trees the sun are drinking ;
Those white clouds, drowsing through
the skies,
Grew not so beautiful by thinking.

" Come out ! with me the oriole cries,
Escape the demon that pursues you !
And, hark, the cuckoo weatherwise,
Still hiding, farther onward woos
you."

" Alas, dear friend, that, all my days,
Has poured from that syringa thicket
The quaintly discontinuous lays
To which I hold a season-ticket,

" A season-ticket cheaply bought
With a dessert of pilfered berries,
And who so oft my soul hast caught
With morn and evening voluntaries,

" Deem me not faithless, if all day
Among my dusty books I linger,
No pipe, like thee, for June to play
With fancy-led, half-conscious finger.

" A bird is singing in my brain
And bubbling o'er with mingled
fancies,
Gay, tragic, rapt, right heart of Spain
Fed with the sap of old romances.

" I ask no ampler skies than those
His magic music rears above me,
No falsier friends, no truer foes, —
And does not Doña Clara love me ?

" Cloaked shapes, a twanging of guitars,
A rush of feet, and rapiers clashing,
Then silence deep with breathless stars,
And overhead a white hand flashing.

“ O music of all moods and climes,
 Vengeful, forgiving, sensuous, saintly,
 Where still, between the Christian
 chimes,
 ‘The moorish cymbal tinkles faintly !

“ O life borne lightly in the hand,
 For friend or foe with grace Castilian !
 O valley safe in Fancy’s land,
 Not tramped to mud yet by the mil-
 lion !

“ Bird of to-day, thy songs are stale
 To his, my singer of all weathers,
 My Calderon, my nightingale,
 My Arab soul in Spanish feathers.

“ Ah, friend, these singers dead so long,
 And still, God knows, in purgatory,
 Give its best sweetness to all song,
 To Nature’s self her better glory.”

IN THE TWILIGHT.

MEN say the sullen instrument,
 That, from the Master’s bow,
 With pangs of joy or woe,
 Feels music’s soul through every fibre
 sent,
 Whispers the ravished strings
 More than he knew or meant ;
 Old summers in its memory glow ;
 The secrets of the wind it sings ;
 It hears the April-loosened springs ;
 And mixes with its mood
 All it dreamed when it stood
 In the murmurous pine-wood
 Long ago !

The magical moonlight then
 Steeped every bough and cone ;
 The roar of the brook in the glen
 Came dim from the dis’ance blown ;
 The wind through its glooms sang low,
 And it swayed to and fro
 With delight as it stood,
 In the wonderful wood,
 Long ago !

O my life, have we not had seasons
 That only said, Live and rejoice ?
 That asked not for causes and reasons,

But made us all feeling and voice ?
 When we went with the winds in their
 blowing,
 When Nature and we were peers,
 And we seemed to share in the flowing
 Of the inexhaustible years ?
 Have we not from the earth drawn
 juices
 Too fine for earth’s sordid uses ?
 Have I heard, have I seen
 All I feel and I know ?
 Doth my heart overween ?
 Or could it have been
 Long ago ?

Sometimes a breath floats by me,
 An odor from Dreamland sent,
 That makes the ghost seem nigh me
 Of a splendor that came and went,
 Of a life lived somewhere, I know
 not
 In what diviner sphere,
 Of memories that stay not and go not,
 Like music heard once by an ear
 That cannot forget or reclaim it,
 A something so shy, it would shame
 it
 To make it a show,
 A something too vague, could I
 name it,
 For others to know,
 As if I had lived it or dreamed it,
 As if I had acted or schemed it,
 Long ago !

And yet, could I live it over,
 This life that stirs in my brain,
 Could I be both maiden and lover,
 Moon and tide, bee and clover,
 As I seem to have been, once again,
 Could I but speak and show it,
 This pleasure more sharp than pain.
 That baffles and lures me so,
 The world should not lack a poet,
 Such as it had
 In the ages glad,
 Long ago !

THE FOOT-PATH.

IT mounts athwart the windy hill
 Through sallow slopes of upland bare.

And Fancy climbs with foot-fall still
Its narrowing curves that end in air.

By day, a warmer-hearted blue
Stoops softly to that topmost swell ;
Its thread-like windings seem a clew
To gracious climes where all is well.

By night, far yonder, I surmise
An ampler world than clips my ken,
Where the great stars of happier skies
Commingle nobler fates of men.

I look and long, then haste me home,
Still master of my secret rare ;
Once tried, the path would end in
Rome,
But now it leads me everywhere.

Forever to the new it guides,
From former good, old overmuch ;
What Nature for her poets hides,
'T is wiser to divine than clutch.

The bird I list hath never come
Within the scope of mortal ear ;
My prying step would make him dumb,
And the fair tree, his shelter, sear

Behind the hill, behind the sky,
Behind my inmost thought, he sings ;
No feet avail ; to hear it nigh,
The song itself must lend the wings.

Sing on, sweet bird close hid, and raise
Those angel stairways in my brain,
That climb from these low-vaulted days
To spacious sunshines far from pain.

Sing when thou wilt, enchantment fleet,
I leave thy covert haunt untrod,

And envy Science not her feat
To make a twice-told tale of God.

They said the fairies tript no more,
And long ago that Pan was dead ;
'T was but that fools preferred to bore
Earth's rind inch-deep for truth in-
stead.

Pan leaps and pipes all summer long,
The fairies dance each full-mooned
night,

Would we but doff our lenses strong,
And trust our wiser eyes' delight.

City of Elf-land, just without
Our seeing, marvel ever new,
Glimpsed in fair weather, a sweet doubt
Sketched-in, mirage-like, on the blue.

I build thee in yon sunset cloud,
Whose edge allures to climb the
height ;

I hear thy drowned bells, inly-loud,
From still pools dusk with dreams
of night.

Thy gates are shut to hardest will,
Thy countersign of long-lost speech,—
Those fountained courts, those cham-
bers still,
Fronting Time's far East, who shall
reach ?

I know not and will never pry,
But trust our human heart for all ;
Wonders that from the seeker fly
Into an open sense may fall.

Hide in thine own soul, and surprise
The password of the unwary elves ;
Seek it, thou canst not bribe their
spies ;

Unsought, they whisper it themselves.

POEMS OF THE WAR.

THE WASHERS OF THE
SHROUD.

OCTOBER, 1851.

ALONG a river-side, I know not where,
I walked one night in mystery of
dream ;
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my
hair,
To think what chanced me by the pallid
gleam
Of a moon-wraith that waned through
haunted air.

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-
mist
Their halos, wavering thistledowns of
light ;
The loon, that seemed to mock some
goblin tryst,
Laughed ; and the echoes, huddling
in affright,
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down
the night.

Then all was silent, till there smote my
ear
A movement in the stream that checked
my breath ;
Was it the slow plash of a wading deer ?
But something said, " This water is of
Death !
The Sisters wash a shroud, — ill thing
to hear ! "

I, looking then, beheld the ancient
Three
Known to the Greek's and to the North-
man's creed,
That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,

Still crooning, as they weave their end-
less brede,
One song : " Time was, Time is, and
Time shall be. "

No wrinkled crones were they, as I
had deemed,
But fair as yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed ;
Something too high for joy, too deep
for sorrow,
Thrilled in their tones, and from their
faces gleamed.

" Still men and nations reap as they
have strawn, "
So sang they, working at their task the
while ;
" The fatal raiment must be cleansed
ere dawn :
For Austria ? Italy ? the Sea-Queen's
isle ?
O'er what quenched grandeur must our
shroud be drawn ?

" Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,
That gathered States for children round
his knees,
That tamed the wave to be his posting-
horse,
Feller of forests, linker of the seas,
Bridge-builder, hammerer, youngest
son of Thor's ?

" What make we, murmur'st thou ? and
what are we ?
When empires must be wound, we
bring the shroud,
The time-old web of the implacable
Three :

Is it too coarse for him, the young and proud?
Earth's mightiest deigned to wear it, —
why not he?"

"Is there no hope?" I moaned, "so strong, so fair!
Our Fowler whose proud bird would brook erewhile
No rival's swoop in all our western air!
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file
For him, life's morn yet golden in his hair?"

"Leave me not hopeless, ye un pitying dames!
I see, half seeing. Tell me, ye who scanned
The stars, Earth's elders, still must noblest aims
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands?
Must Hesper join the wailing ghosts of names?"

"When grass-blades stiffen with red battle-dew,
Ye deem we choose the victor and the slain:
Say, choose we them that shall be leal and true
To the heart's longing, the high faith of brain?
Yet there the victory lies, if ye but knew.

"Three roots bear up Dominion:
Knowledge, Will, —
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the third, —
Obedience, — 't is the great tap-root that still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their utmost skill.

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper? 'T is not we
Denounce it, but the Law before all time:
The brave makes danger opportunity;
The waverer, paltering with the chance sublime,
Dwarfs it to peril: which shall Hesper be?"

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's seat
To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their maw?
Hath he the Many's plaudits found more sweet
Than Wisdom? held Opinion's wind for Law?
Then let him hearken for the doomster's feet!

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest rock,
States climb to power by; slippery those with gold
Down which they stumble to eternal mock:
No chafferer's hand shall long the sceptre hold,
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the block.

"We sing old Sagas, songs of weal and woe,
Mystic because too cheaply understood;
Dark sayings are not ours; men hear and know,
See Evil weak, see strength alone in Good,
Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of tow.

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time
Is,
That offers choice of glory or of gloom;
The solver makes Time Shall Be surely his.
But hasten, Sisters! for even now the tomb
Grates its slow hinge and calls from the abyss."

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet for him,
Whose large horizon, westering, star by star
Wins from the void to where on Ocean's rim
The sunset shuts the world with golder bar,
Not yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow dim!

"His shall be larger manhood, saved for those

That walk unblenching through the
trial-fires ;
Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst
of woes,
And he no base-born son of craven
sires,
Whose eye need blench confronted with
his foes.

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for
those who win
Death's royal purple in the foeman's
lines ;
Peace, too, brings tears ; and 'mid the
battle-din,
The wiser ear some text of God divines,
For the sheathed blade may rust with
darker sin.

"God, give us peace ! not such as lulls
to sleep,
But sword on thigh, and brow with pur-
pose knit !
And let our Ship of State to harbor
sweep,
Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,
And her leashed thunders gathering for
their leap !"

So cried I with clenched hands and
passionate pain,
Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's
side ;
Again the loon laughed mocking, and
again
The echoes bayed far down the night
and died,
While waking I recalled my wandering
brain.

TWO SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF BLONDEL.

AUTUMN, 1863.

SCENE I. — *Near a Castle in Germany.*

'T WERE no hard task, perchance, to
win
The popular laurel for my song ;
'T were only to comply with sin,
And own the crown, though snatched
by wrong :

Rather Truth's chaplet let me wear,
Though sharp as death its thorns may
sting ;
Loyal to Loyalty, I bear
No badg. — but of my rightful king.

Patient by town and tower I wait,
Or o'er the blustering moorland go ;
I buy no praise at cheaper rate,
Or what faint hearts may fancy so ;
For me, no joy in lady's bower,
Or hall, or tourney, will I sing,
Till the slow stars wheel round the hour
That crowns my hero and my king.

While all the land runs red with strife,
And wealth is won by pedler-crimes,
Let who will find content in life
And tinkle in unmanly rhymes ;
I wait and seek ; through dark and
light,
Safe in my heart my hope I bring,
Till I once more my faith may plight
To him my whole soul owns her king.

When power is filched by drone and
dolt,
And, with caught breath and flashing
eye,
Her knuckles whitening round the bolt,
Vengeance leans eager from the sky,
While this and that the people guess,
And to the skirts of praters cling,
Who court the crowd they should com-
press,
I turn in scorn to seek my king.

Shut in what tower of darkling chance
Or dungeon of a narrow doom,
Dream'st thou of battle-axe and lance
That for the Cross make crashing
room ?
Come ! with hushed breath the battle
waits
In the wild van thy mace's swing ;
While doubters parley with their fates,
Make thou thine own and ours, my
king !

O, strong to keep upright the old,
And wise to buttress with the new,
Prudent, as only are the bold,
Clear-eyed, as only are the true,
To foes benign, to friendship stern,

Intent to imp Law's broken wing,
Who would not die, if death might earn
The right to kiss thy hand, my king ?

SCENE II. — *An Inn near the Château
of Chalus.*

WELL, the whole thing is over, and
here I sit

With one arm in a sling and a milk-
score of gashes,
And this flagon of Cyprus must e'er
warm my wit,

Since what's left of youth's flame is a
head flecked with ashes.

I remember I sat in this very same
inn, —

I was young then, and one young man
thought I was handsome, —

I had found out what prison King
Richard was in,
And was spurring for England to push
on the ransom.

How I scorned the dull souls that sat
guzzling around

And knew not my secret nor recked
my derision !

Let the world sink or swim, John or
Richard be crowned,

All one, so the beer-tax got lenient
revision.

How little I dreamed, as I tramped up
and down,

That granting our wish one of Fate's
saddest jokes is !

I had mine with a vengeance, — my
king got his crown,

And made his whole business to
break other folks's.

I might as well join in the safe old *tum,*
tum :

A hero's an excellent loadstar, —
but, bless ye,

What infinite odds 'twixt a hero to come
And your only too palpable hero *in*
esse !

Precisely the odds (such examples are
rife)

'Twixt the poem conceived and the
rhyme we make show of,

'Twixt the boy's morning dream and
the wake-up of life,

'Twixt the Blondel God meant and a
Blondel I know of !

But the world's better off, I'm con-
vinced of it now,

Than if heroes, like buns, could be
bought for a penny

To regard all mankind as their haltered
milch-cow,

And just care for themselves. Well,
God cares for the many ;

For somehow the poor old Earth blun-
ders along,

Each son of hers adding his mite of
unfitness,

And, choosing the sure way of coming
out wrong,

Gets to port as the next generation
will witness.

You think her old ribs have come all
crashing through,

If a whisk of Fate's broom snap your
cobweb asunder ;

But her rivets were clinched by a wiser
than you,

And our sins cannot push the Lord's
right hand from under.

Better one honest man who can wait
for God's mind

In our poor shifting scene here-
though heroes were plenty !

Better one bite, at forty, of Truth's
bitter rind,

Than the hot wine that gushed from
the vintage of twenty !

I see it all now : when I wanted a
king,

'T was the kingship that failed in
myself I was seeking, —

'T is so much less easy to do than to
sing,

So much simpler to reign by a proxy
than *be* king !

Yes, I think I *do* see : after all 's said
and sung,

Take this one rule of life and you
never will rue it, —

'T is but do your own duty and hold
your own tongue

And Blondel were royal himself, if
he knew it !

MEMORIÆ POSITUM.

R. G. S.

I.

BENEATH the trees,
 My life-long friends in this dear spot,
 Sad now for eyes that see them not
 I hear the autumnal breeze
 Wake the sear leaves to sigh for glad-
 ness gone,
 Whispering hoarse presage of obliv-
 ion, —
 Hear, restless as the seas,
 Time's grim feet rustling through the
 withered grace
 Of many a spreading realm and strong-
 stemmed race,
 Even as my own through these.

Why make we moan
 For loss that doth enrich us yet
 With upward yearnings of regret?
 Bleaker than unmossed stone
 Our lives were but for this immortal
 gain
 Of unstilled longing and inspiring
 pain!
 As thrills of long-hushed tone
 Live in the viol, so our souls grow
 fine
 With keen vibrations from the touch
 divine
 Of noble natures gone.

'T were indiscreet
 To vex the shy and sacred grief
 With harsh obtrusions of relief;
 Yet, Verse, with noiseless feet,
 Go whisper: "*This death hath far
 choicer ends
 Than slowly to impearl in hearts of
 friends;
 These obsequies 't is meet
 Not to seclude in closets of the heart,
 But, church-like, with wide doorways,
 to impart
 Even to the heedless street.*"

II.

Brave, good, and true,
 I see him stand before me now,
 And read again on that young brow,
 Where every hope was new,

How sweet were life! Yet, by the
 mouth firm-set,
 And look made up for Duty's utmost
 debt,
 I could divine he knew
 That death within the sulphurous hos-
 tile lines,
 In the mere wreck of nobly-pitched
 designs,
 Plucks heart's-ease, and not rue.

Happy their end
 Who vanish down life's evening
 stream
 Placid as swans that drift in dream
 Round the next river-bend!
 Happy long life, with honor at the close,
 Friends' painless tears, the softened
 thought of foes!
 And yet, like him, to spend
 All at a gush, keeping our first faith
 sure
 From mid-life's doubt and eld's con-
 tentment poor, —
 What more could Fortune send?

Right in the van,
 On the red rampart's slippery swell,
 With heart that beat a charge, he fell
 Foeward, as fits a man;
 But the high soul burns on to light
 men's feet
 Where death for noble ends makes dy-
 ing sweet;
 His life her crescent's span
 Orbs full with share in their undarken-
 ing days
 Who ever climbed the battailous steep
 of praise
 Since valor's praise began.

III.

His life's expense
 Hath won for him coeval youth
 With the immaculate prime of Truth:
 While we, who make pretence
 At living on, and wake and eat and
 sleep,
 And life's stale trick by repetition keep,
 Our fickle permanence
 (A poor leaf-shadow on a brook, whose
 play
 Of busy idlesse ceases with our day)
 Is the mere cheat of sense.

We bide our chance,
 Unhappy, and make terms with Fate
 A little more to let us wait ;
 He leads for aye the advance,
 Hope's forlorn-hopes that plant the
 desperate good
 For nobler Earths and days of manlier
 mood ;
 Our wall of circumstance
 Cleared at a bound, he flashes o'er the
 fight,
 A saintly shape of fame, to cheer the
 right
 And steel each wavering glance.

I write of one,
 While with dim eyes I think of three ;
 Who weeps not others fair and brave
 as he ?
 Ah, when the fight is won,
 Dear Land, whom triflers now make
 bold to scorn,
 (Thee ! from whose forehead Earth
 awaits her morn,)
 How nobler shall the sun
 Flame in thy sky, how braver breathe
 thy air,
 That thou bred'st children who for thee
 could dare
 And die as thine have done !
 1863.

ON BOARD THE '76.

WRITTEN FOR MR. BRYANT'S SEVEN-
 TIETH BIRTHDAY.

NOVEMBER 3, 1864.

OUR ship lay tumbling in an angry sea,
 Her rudder gone, her main-mast
 o'er the side ;
 Her scuppers, from the waves' clutch
 staggering free
 Trailed threads of priceless crimson
 through the tide ;
 Sails, shrouds, and spars with pirate
 cannon torn,
 We lay, awaiting morn.
 Awaiting morn, such morn as mocks
 despair ;
 And she that bore the promise of the
 world

Within her sides, now hopeless, helm-
 less, bare,
 At random o'er the wildering waters
 hurled ;
 The reek of battle drifting slow alee
 Not sullener than we.

Morn came at last to peer into our
 woe,
 When lo, a sail ! Now surely help
 was nigh ;
 The red cross flames aloft, Christ's
 pledge ; but no,
 Her black guns grinning hate, she
 rushes by
 And hails us : — " Gains the leak ! Ay,
 so we thought !
 Sink, then, with curses fraught ! "

I leaned against my gun still angry-
 hot,
 And my lids tingled with the tears
 held back ;
 This scorn methought was crueller than
 shot :
 The manly death-grip in the battle-
 wrack,
 Yard-arm to yard-arm, were more
 friendly far
 Than such fear-smothered war.

There our foe wallowed, like a wounded
 brute
 The fiercer for his hurt. What now
 were best ?
 Once more tug bravely at the peril's
 root,
 Though death came with it ? Or
 evade the test
 If right or wrong in this God's world of
 ours
 Be leagued with higher powers ?

Some, faintly loyal, felt their pulses
 lag
 With the slow beat that doubts and
 then despairs ;
 Some, caitiff, would have struck the
 starry flag
 That knits us with our past, and
 makes us heirs
 Of deeds high-hearted as were ever
 done
 'Neath the all-seeing sun.

But there was one, the Singer of our crew,
 Upon whose head Age waved his peaceful sign,
 But whose red heart's-blood no surrender knew;
 And couchant under brows of massive line,
 The eyes, like guns beneath a parapet,
 Watched, charged with lightnings yet.

The voices of the hills did his obey;
 The torrents flashed and tumbled in his song;
 He brought our native fields from far away,
 Or set us 'mid the innumerable throng
 Of dateless woods, or where we heard the calm
 Old homestead's evening psalm.

But now he sang of faith to things unseen,
 Of freedom's birthright given to us in trust;
 And words of doughty cheer he spoke between,
 That made all earthly fortune seem as dust,
 Matched with that duty, old as Time and new,
 Of being brave and true.

We, listening, learned what makes the might of words, —
 Manhood to back them, constant as a star;
 His voice rammed home our cannon, edged our swords,
 And sent our boarders shouting; shroud and spar
 Heard him and stiffened; the sails heard, and wooed
 The winds with loftier mood.

In our dark hours he manned our guns again;
 Remanned ourselves from his own manhood's store;
 Pride, honor, country, throbbled through all his strain;
 And shall we praise? God's praise was his before;

And on our futile laurels he looks down,
 Himself our bravest crown.

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION.

JULY 21, 1865.

I.

WEAK-WINGED is song,
 Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
 Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
 We seem to do them wrong,
 Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
 Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
 Our trivial song to honor those who come
 With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
 And shaped in squadron-strophes their desire,
 Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire:
 Yet sometimes feathered words are strong,
 A gracious memory to buoy up and save
 From Lethe's dreamless ooze, the common grave
 Of the unventurous throng.

II.

To-day our Reverend Mother welcomes back
 Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
 The deeper teaching of her mystic tone,
 And offered their fresh lives to make it good:
 No lore of Greece or Rome,
 No science peddling with the names of things,
 Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
 Can lift our life with wings
 Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,

And lengthen out our dates
 With that clear fame whose memory
 sings
 In many hearts to come, and nerves
 them and dilates :
 Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us
 all !
 Not such the trumpet-call
 Of thy diviner mood,
 That could thy sons entice
 From happy homes and toils, the fruit-
 ful nest
 Of those half-virtues which the world
 calls best,
 Into War's tumult rude ;
 But rather far that stern device
 The sponsors chose that round thy
 cradle stood
 In the dim, unventured wood,
 The VERITAS that lurks beneath
 The letter's unprolific sheath,
 Life of whate'er makes life worth
 living,
 Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal
 food,
 One heavenly thing whereof earth
 hath the giving.

III.

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's
 best oil
 Amid the dusk of books to find her,
 Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
 With the cast mantle she hath left
 behind her.
 Many in sad faith sought for her,
 Many with crossed hands sighed
 for her ;
 But these, our brothers, fought for
 her,
 At life's dear peril wrought for her,
 So loved her that they died for her,
 Tasting the raptured fleetness
 Of her divine completeness :
 Their higher instinct knew
 Those love her best who to themselves
 are true,
 And what they dare to dream of, dare
 to do ;
 They followed her and found her
 Where all may hope to find,
 Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,

But beautiful, with Janger's sweetness
 round her.
 Where faith made whole with deed
 Breathes its awakening breath
 Into the lifeless creed,
 They saw her plumed and mailed,
 With sweet stern face unveiled,
 And 'all-repaying eyes, look proud on
 them in death.

IV.

Our slender life runs rippling by, and
 glides
 Into the silent hollow of the past ;
 What is there that abides
 To make the next age better for the
 last ?
 Is earth too poor to give us
 Something to live for here that shall
 outlive us ?
 Some more substantial boon
 Than such as flows and ebbs with For-
 tune's fickle moon ?
 The little that we see
 From doubt is never free ;
 The little that we do
 Is but half-nobly true ;
 With our laborious hiving
 What men call treasure, and the gods
 call dross,
 Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
 Only secure in every one's conniving,
 A long account of nothings paid with
 loss,
 Where we poor puppets, jerked by un-
 seen wires,
 After our little hour of strut and rave,
 With all our pasteboard passions and
 desires,
 Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal
 fires,
 Are tossed pell-mell together in the
 grave.
 But stay ! no age was e'er degenerate,
 Unless men held it at too cheap a rate,
 For in our likeness still we shape our
 fate
 Ah, there is something here
 Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer,
 Something that gives our feeble light
 A high immunity from Night,
 Something that leaps life's narrow
 bars

To claim its birthright with the hosts
of heaven ;

A seed of sunshine that doth leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams
of stars,

And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than
the Day ;

A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence ;

A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not
let it be,

Still glimmering from the heights of
undegenerate years.

v.

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery
meads,

To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds,
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and
stay

By battle's flashes gropes a desperate
way,

And every turf the fierce foot clings-to
bleeds.

Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Light the black lips of cannon, and the
sword

Dreams in its easeful sheath ;
But some day the live coal behind the
thought,

Whether from Baäl's stone ob-
scene,

Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame ; the war of tongue
and pen

Learns with what deadly purpose it
was fraught,

And, helpless in the fiery passion
caught,

Shakes all the pillared state with shock
of men :

Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed

Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful : " Was it, then,
my praise,

And not myself was loved? Prove now
thy truth ;

I claim of thee the promise of thy
youth ;

Give me thy life, or cower in empty
phrase,

The victim of thy genius, not its mate ! "

Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed

As bravely in the closet as the field,
So bountiful is Fate ;

But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,

To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's

plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic

breeds,
Who stand self-poised on man-
hood's solid earth,

Not forced to frame excuses for his
birth,

Fed from within with all the strength
he needs.

vi.

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,
Whom late the Nation he had led,

With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry

grief :
Forgive me, if from present things I
turn

To speak what in my heart will beat
and burn,

And hang my wreath on his world-
honored urn.

Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man

Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote :

For him her Old World moulds aside
she threw,

And, choosing sweet clay from the
breast

Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero

new,

Wise, steadfast in the strength of God,
and true.

How beautiful to see

Once more a shepherd of mankind in-
deed,

Who loved his charge, but never loved
to lead ;

One whose meek flock the people joyed
to be,

Not lured by any cheat of birth,

But by his clear-grained human
worth,

And brave old wisdom of sincerity !

They knew that outward grace is
dust ;

They could not choose but trust

In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering
skill,

And supple-tempered will

That bent like perfect steel to spring
again and thrust.

His was no lonely mountain-peak
of mind,

Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy
bars,

A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors
blind ;

Broad prairie rather, genial, level-
lined,

Fruitful and friendly for all human
kind,

Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of
loftiest stars.

Nothing of Europe here,

Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward
still,

Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme de-
face ;

Here was a type of the true elder
race,

And one of Plutarch's men talked with
us face to face.

I praise him not ; it were too late ;
And some innate weakness there must
be

In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot
wait,

Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he :

He knew to bide his time,

And can his fame abide,

Still patient in his simple faith sublime,

Till the wise years decide.

Great captains, with their guns and
drums,

Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes ;

These all are gone, and, standing
like a tower,

Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foresee-
ing man,

Sagacious, patient, dreading praise,
not blame,

New birth of our new soil, the first
American.

VII.

Long as man's hope insatiate can
discern

Or only guess some more inspir-
ing goal

Outside of Self, enduring as the
pole,

Along whose course the flying axles
burn

Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's
manlier brood ;

Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable
mind ;

So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names it
masks,

Freedom, Law, Country, this ethe-
real mood

That thanks the Fates for their severer
tasks,

Feeling its challenged pulses leap,
While others skulk in subterfuges
cheap,

And, set in Danger's van, has all the
boon it asks,

Shall win man's praise and woman's
love,

Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,

A virtue round whose forehead we
inwreath

Laurels that with a living passion
breathe

When other crowns grow, while we
twine them, sear.

What brings us thronging these high
rites to pay,

And seal these hours the noblest of our
year,
Save that our brothers found this
better way ?

VIII.

We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey
and milk ;
But 't was they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as
silk.
We welcome back our bravest and
our best ; —
Ah me ! not all ! some come not with
the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as
any here !
I strive to mix some gladness with my
strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear :
I sweep them for a pæan, but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge, and die away, in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the
gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb
turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died
to gain :
Fittier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving ;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not. — Say
not so !
'T is not the grapes of Canaan that re-
pay,
But the high faith that failed not by
the way ;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the
grave ;
No bar of endless night exiles the
brave ;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed
behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations
blow !
For never shall their aureoled presence
lack :
I see them muster in a gleaming row,

With ever-youthful brows that nobler
show ;
We find in our dull road their shining
track ;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration ;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-
hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Ex-
pectation !

IX.

But is there hope to save
Even this ethereal essence from the
grave ?
What ever 'scaped Oblivion's subtle
wrong
Save a few clarion names, or golden
threads of song ?
Before my musing eye
The mighty ones of old sweep by,
Disvoicèd now and insubstantial
things,
As noisy once as we ; poor ghosts of
kings,
Shadows of empire wholly gone to
dust,
And many races, nameless long ago,
To darkness driven by that imperious
gust
Of ever-rushing Time that here doth
blow :
O visionary world, condition strange,
Where naught abiding is but only
Change,
Where the deep-bolted stars themselves
still shift and range !
Shall we to more continuance make
pretence ?
Renown builds tombs ; a life-estate is
Wit ;
And, bit by bit,
The cunning years steal all from us but
woe ;
Leaves are we, whose decays no har-
vest sow.
But, when we vanish hence,
Shall they lie forceless in the dark
below,

Save to make green their little length
 of sods,
 Or deepen pansies for a year or two,
 Who now to us are shining-sweet as
 gods?
 Was dying all they had the skill to
 do?
 That were not fruitless : but the Soul
 resents
 Such short-lived service, as if blind
 events
 Ruled without her, or earth could so
 endure ;
 She claims a more divine investiture
 Of longer tenure than Fame's airy
 rents ;
 Whate'er she touches doth her nature
 share ;
 Her inspiration haunts the ennobled
 air,
 Gives eyes to mountains blind,
 Ears to the deaf earth, voices to the
 wind,
 And her clear trump sings succor
 everywhere
 By lonely bivouacs to the wakeful
 mind ;
 For soul inherits all that soul could
 dare :
 Yea, Manhood hath a wider span
 And larger privilege of life than man.
 The single deed, the private sacrifice,
 So radiant now through proudly-
 hidden tears,
 Is covered up ere long from mortal
 eyes
 With thoughtless drift of the decidu-
 ous years ;
 But that high privilege that makes all
 men peers,
 That leap of heart whereby a people
 rise
 Up to a noble anger's height,
 And, flamed on by the Fates, not shrink,
 but grow more bright,
 That swift validity in noble veins,
 Of choosing danger and disdain-
 ing shame,
 Of being set on flame
 By the pure fire that flies all contact
 base,
 But wraps its chosen with angelic
 might,
 These are imperishable gains,

Sure as the sun, medicinal as light,
 These hold great futures in their lusty
 reins
 And certify to earth a new imperial
 race.

x.

Who now shall sneer?
 Who dare again to say we trace
 Our lines to a plebeian race?
 Roundhead and Cavalier!
 Dumb are those names erewhile in
 battle loud ;
 Dream-footed as the shadow of a cloud,
 They flit across the ear :
 That is best blood that hath most iron
 in 't
 To edge resolve with, pouring without
 stint
 For what makes manhood dear.
 Tell us not of Plantagenets,
 Hapsburgs, and Guelfs, whose thin
 bloods crawl
 Down from some victor in a border-
 brawl !
 How poor their outworn coronets,
 Matched with one leaf of that plain
 civic wreath
 Our brave for honor's blazon shall be-
 queath,
 Through whose desert a rescued Na-
 tion sets
 Her heel on treason, and the trumpet
 hears
 Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen
 ears
 With vain resentments and more vain
 regrets !

xi.

Not in anger, not in pride,
 Pure from passion's mixture rude
 Ever to base earth allied,
 But with far-heard gratitude,
 Still with heart and voice re-
 newed,
 To heroes living and dear martyrs
 dead,
 The strain should close that consecrates
 our brave.
 Lift the heart and lift the head !
 Lofty be its mood and grave.

Not without a martial ring,
 Not without a prouder tread
 And a peal of exultation :
 Little right has he to sing
 Through whose heart in such an
 hour
 Beats no march of conscious
 power,
 Sweeps no tumult of elation !
 'T is no Man we celebrate,
 By his country's victories great,
 A hero half, and half the whim of
 Fate,
 But the pith and marrow of a
 Nation
 Drawing force from all her men,
 Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
 For her time of need, and then
 Pulsing it again through them,
 Till the basest can no longer cower,
 Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
 Touched but in passing by her mantle-
 hem.
 Come back, then, noble pride, for 't is
 her dower !
 How could poet ever tower,
 If his passions, hopes, and fears,
 If his triumphs and his tears,
 Kept not measure with his peo-
 ple ?
 Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds
 and waves !
 Clash out, glad bells, from every rock-
 ing steeple !
 Banners, adance with triumph, bend
 your staves !
 And from every mountain-peak
 Let beacon-fire to answering bea-
 con speak,
 Katahdin tell Monadnock, White-
 face he,
 And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
 Till the glad news be sent
 Across a kindling continent,
 Making earth feel more firm and air
 breathe braver :
 'Be proud ! for she is saved, and all
 have helped to save her !
 She that lifts up the manhood of
 the poor,
 She of the open soul and open door,
 With room about her hearth for all
 mankind !
 The fire is dreadful in her eyes no
 more ;

From her bold front the helm she
 doth unbind,
 Sends all her handmaid armies
 back to spin,
 And bids her navies, that so lately
 hurled
 Their crashing battle, hold their
 thunders in,
 Swimming like birds of calm along
 the unharmed shore.
 No challenge sends she to the elder
 world,
 That looked askance and hated ; a
 light scorn
 Plays o'er her mouth, as round her
 mighty knees
 She calls her children back, and
 waits the morn
 Of nobler day, enthroned between her
 subject seas."

XII.

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast
 found release !
 Thy God, in these distempered
 days,
 Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of
 His ways,
 And through thine enemies hath
 wrought thy peace !
 Bow down in prayer and praise !
 No poorest in thy borders but may now
 Lift to the juster skies a man's enfran-
 chised brow,
 O Beautiful ! my Country ! ours once
 more !
 Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled
 hair
 O'er such sweet brows as never other
 wore,
 And letting thy set lips,
 Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
 The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
 What words divine of lover or of poet
 Could tell our love and make thee
 know it,
 Among the Nations bright beyond
 compare ?
 What were our lives without
 thee ?
 What all our lives to save thee ?
 We reck not what we gave thee ;
 We will not dare to doubt thee,
 But ask whatever else, and we will
 dare !

L'ENVOI.

TO THE MUSE.

WHITHER? Albeit I follow fast,
 In all life's circuit I but find,
 Not where thou art, but where thou
 wast,
 Sweet beckoner, more fleet than
 wind!

I haunt the pine-dark solitudes,
 With soft brown silence carpeted,
 And plot to snare thee in the woods:
 Peace I o'ertake, but thou art fled!
 I find the rock where thou didst rest,
 The moss thy skinning foot hath
 prest;

All Nature with thy parting thrills,
 Like branches after birds new-flown;
 Thy passage hill and hollow fills
 With hints of virtue not their own;
 In dimples still the water slips
 Where thou hast dipt thy finger-tips;
 Just, just beyond, forever burn
 Gleams of a grace without return;
 Upon thy shade I plant my foot,
 And through my frame strange rap-
 tures shoot;
 All of thee but thyself I grasp;
 I seem to fold thy luring shape,
 And vague air to my bosom clasp,
 Thou lithe, perpetual Escape!

One mask and then another drops,
 And thou art secret as before:
 Sometimes with flooded ear I list,
 And hear thee, wondrous organist,
 From mighty continental stops
 A thunder of new music pour;
 Through pipes of earth and air and
 stone
 Thy inspiration deep is blown;
 Through mountains, forests, open
 downs,
 Lakes, railroads, prairies, states, and
 towns,
 Thy gathering fugue goes rolling on

From Maine to utmost Oregon;
 The factory-wheels in cadence hum,
 From brawling parties concords come;
 All this I hear, or seem to hear,
 But when, enchanted, I draw near
 To mate with words the various theme,
 Life seems a whiff of kitchen steam,
 History an organ-grinder's thrum,
 For thou hast slipt from it and me
 And all thine organ-pipes left dumb,
 Most mutable Perversity!

Not weary yet, I still must seek,
 And hope for luck next day, next week;
 I go to see the great man ride,
 Shiplike, the swelling human tide
 That floods to bear him into port,
 Trophied from Senate-hall and Court;
 Thy magnetism, I feel it there,
 Thy rhythmic presence fleet and rare,
 Making the Mob a moment fine
 With glimpses of their own Divine,
 As in their demigod they see
 Their cramped ideal soaring free;
 'T was thou didst bear the fire about,
 That, like the springing of a mine
 Sent up to heaven the street-long
 shour;
 Full well I know that thou wast here,
 It was thy breath that brushed my ear;
 But vainly in the stress and whirl
 I dive for thee, the moment's pearl.

Through every shape thou well canst
 run,
 Proteus, 'twixt rise and set of sun,
 Well pleased with logger-camps in
 Maine
 As where Milan's pale Duomo lies
 A stranded glacier on the plain,
 Its peaks and pinnacles of ice
 Melted in many a quaint device,
 And sees, above the city's din,

Afar its silent Alpine kin :
 I track thee over carpets deep
 To wealth's and beauty's inmost keep ;
 Across the sand of bar-room floors
 'Mid the stale reek of boosing boors ;
 Where drowse the hay-field's fragrant
 heats,

Or the flail-heart of Autumn beats ;
 I dog thee through the market's throngs
 To where the sea with myriad tongues
 Laps the green edges of the pier,
 And the tall ships that eastward steer,
 Curtsey their farewells to the town,
 O'er the curved distance lessening
 down ;

I follow allwhere for thy sake.
 Touch thy robe's hem, but ne'er o'er-
 take,

Find where, scarce yet unmoving, lies,
 Warm from thy limbs, thy last disguise ;
 But thou another shape hast donned,
 And lurest still just, just beyond !

But here a voice. I know not whence,
 Thrills clearly through my inward sense,
 Saying : " See where she sits at home
 While thou in search of her dost roam !
 All summer long her ancient wheel

Whirls humming by the open door,
 Or, when the hickory's social zeal

Sets the wide chimney in a roar,
 Close-nestled by the tinkling hearth,
 It modulates the household mirth
 With that sweet serious undertone
 Of duty, music all her own ;
 Still as of old she sits and spins
 Our hopes, our sorrows, and our sins :
 With equal care she twines the fates
 Of cottages and mighty states ;
 She spins the earth, the air, the sea,
 The maiden's unschooled fancy free,
 The boy's first love, the man's first grief,
 The budding and the fall o' the leaf ;

The piping west-wind's snowy care
 For her their cloudy fleeccs spare,
 Or from the thorns of evil times
 She can glean wool to twist her rhymes ;
 Morning and noon and eve supply
 To her their fairest tints for dye,
 But ever through her twirling thread
 There spires one line of warmest red,
 Tinged from the homestead's genial
 heart,

The stamp and warrant of her art ;
 With this Time's sickle she outwears,
 And blunts the Sisters' baffled shears.

" Harass her not : thy heat and stir
 But greater coyness breed in her ;
 Yet thou mayst find, ere Age's frost,
 Thy long apprenticeship not lost,
 Learning at last that Stygian Fate
 Unberds to him that knows to wait.
 The Muse is womanish, nor deigns
 Her love to him that pules and plains ;
 With proud, averted face she stands
 To him that woos with empty hands.
 Make thyself free of Manhood's guild ;
 Pull down thy barns and greater build ;
 The wood, the mountain, and the plain
 Wave breast-deep with the poet's grain ;
 Pluck thou the sunset's fruit of gold.
 Glean from the heavens and ocean old ;
 From fireside lone and trampling street
 Let thy life garner daily wheat ;
 The epic of a man rehearse,
 Be something better than thy verse ;
 Make thyself rich, and then the Muse
 Shall court thy precious interviews,
 Shall take thy head upon her knee,
 And such enchantment lilt to thee,
 That thou shalt hear the life-blood flow
 From farthest stars to grass-blades
 low,

And find the Listener's science still
 Transcends the Singer's deepest skill ! "

THE CATHEDRAL.

FAR through the memory shines a happy
day,
Cloudless of care, down-shod to every
sense,
And simply perfect from its own re-
source,

As to a bee the new campanula's
Illuminate seclusion swung in air.
Such days are not the prey of setting
suns,
Nor ever blurred with mist of after-
thought ;

Like words made magical by poets dead,
Wherein the music of all meaning is
'The sense hath garnered or the soul di-
vined,

They mingle with our life's ethereal
part,
Sweetening and gathering sweetness
evermore,

By beauty's franchise disenthralled of
time.

I can recall, nay, they are present still,
Parts of myself, the perfume of my
mind,

Days that seem farther off than Homer's
now

Ere yet the child had loudened to the
boy,

And I, recluse from playmates, found
perforce

Companionship in things that not de-
nied

Nor granted wholly ; as is Nature's
wont,

Who, safe in uncontaminate reserve,
Lets us mistake our longing for her love,
And mocks with various echo of our-
selves.

These first sweet frauds upon our con-
sciousness,

That blend the sensual with its imaged
world,

These virginal cognitions, gifts of morn,
Ere life grow noisy, and slower-footed
thought

Can overtake the rapture of the sense,
To thrust between ourselves and what
we feel,

Have something in them secretly divine.
Vainly the eye, once schooled to serve
the brain,

With pains deliberate studies to renew
The ideal vision : second-thoughts are
prose ;

For beauty's acme hath a term as brief
As the wave's poise before it break in
pearl.

Our own breath dims the mirror of the
sense,

Looking too long and closely : at a flash
We snatch the essential grace of mean-
ing out,

And that first passion beggars all be-
hind,

Heirs of a tamer transport prepossessed,
Who, seeing once, has truly seen again
The gray vague of unsympathizing sea
That dragged his Fancy from her moor-
ings back

To shores inhospitable of eldest time,
Till blank foreboding of earth-generated
powers,

Pitiless seignories in the elements,
Omnipotences blind that darkling
smite,

Misgave him, and repaganized the
world ?

Yet, by some subtler touch of sympathy,
These primal apprehensions, dimly
stirred,

Perplex the eye with pictures from with-
in.

This hath made poets dream of lives
foregone

In worlds fantastical, more fair than
ours ;

So Memory cheats us, glimpsing half-
 revealed.
 Even as I write she tries her wonted
 spell
 In that continuous redbreast boding
 rain :
 The bird I hear sings not from yonder
 elm ;
 But the flown ecstasy my childhood
 heard
 Is vocal in my mind, renewed by him,
 Haply made sweeter by the accumulate
 thrill
 That threads my undivided life and
 steals
 A pathos from the years and graves be-
 tween.

I know not how it is with other men,
 Whom I but guess, deciphering my-
 self ;

For me, once felt is so felt nevermore.
 The fleeting relish at sensation's brim
 Had in it the best ferment of the wine.
 One spring I knew as never any since :
 All night the surges of the warm south-
 west

Boomed intermittent through the shud-
 dering elms,
 And brought a morning from the Gulf
 adrift,

Omnipotent with sunshine, whose quick
 charm

Startled with crocuses the sullen turf
 And wiled the bluebird to his whiff of
 song :

One summer hour abides, what time I
 perched,

Dappled with noonday, under simmer-
 ing leaves,

And pulled the pulpy oxhearts, while
 aloof

An oriole clattered and the robins
 shrilled,

Denouncing me an alien and a thief :
 One morn of autumn lords it o'er the
 rest,

When in the lane I watched the ash-
 leaves fall,

Balancing softly earthward without
 wind,

Or twirling with directer impulse down
 On those fallen yesterday, now barbed
 with frost,

While I grew pensive with the pensive
 year :

And once I learned how marvellous
 winter was,

When past the fence-rails, downy-gray
 with rime,

I creaked adventurous o'er the span-
 gled crust

That made familiar fields seem far and
 strange

As those stark wastes that whiten end-
 lessly

In ghastly solitude about the pole,
 And gleam relentless to the unsettling
 sun :

Instant the candid chambers of my brain
 Were painted with these sovran images ;
 And later visions seem but copies pale
 From those unfading frescos of the past,
 Which I, young savage, in my age of
 flint,

Gazed at, and dimly felt a power in me
 Parted from Nature by the joy in her
 That doubtfully revealed me to myself.
 Thenceforward I must stand outside the
 gate ;

And paradise was paradise the more,
 Known once and barred against satiety.

What we call Nature, all outside our-
 selves,

Is but our own conceit of what we see,
 Our own reaction upon what we feel :
 The world's a woman to our shifting
 mood,

Feeling with us, or making due pre-
 tence ;

And therefore we the more persuade
 ourselves

To make all things our thought's con-
 federates,

Conniving with us in what'er we dream.
 So when our Fancy seeks analogies,
 Though she have hidden what she after
 finds,

She loves to cheat herself with feigned
 surprise.

I find my own complexion everywhere :
 No rose, I doubt, was ever, like the first,
 A marvel to the bush it dawned upon,
 The rapture of its life made visible,
 The mystery of its yearning realized,
 As the first babe to the first woman
 born ;

No falcon ever felt delight of wings
 As when, an eyas, from the stolid cliff
 Loosing himself, he followed his high
 heart
 To swim on sunshine, masterless as
 wind;
 And I believe the brown earth takes
 delight
 In the new snowdrop looking back at her,
 To think that by some vernal alchemy
 It could transmute her darkness into
 pearl;
 What is the buxom peony after that,
 With its coarse constancy of hoyden
 blush?
 What the full summer to that wonder
 new?

But, if in nothing else, in us there is
 A sense fastidious hardly reconciled
 To the poor makeshifts of life's scenery,
 Where the same slide must double all
 its parts,
 Shoved in for Tarsus and hitched back
 for Tyre.

I blame not in the soul this daintiness,
 Rashier of surfeit than a humming-bird,
 In things indifferent by sense purveyed;
 It argues her an immortality
 And dateless incomes of experience,
 This unthrift housekeeping that will
 not brook

A dish warmed over at the feast of life,
 And finds Twice stale, served with
 whatever sauce.

Nor matters much how it may go with
 me
 Who dwell in Grub Street and am
 proud to drudge
 Where men, my betters, wet their crust
 with tears:

Use can make sweet the peach's shady
 side,
 That only by reflection tastes of sun.

But she, my Princess, who will some-
 times deign
 My garret to illumine till the walls,
 Narrow and dingy, scrawled with hack-
 neyed thought
 (Poor Richard slowly elbowing Plato
 out).
 Dilate and drape themselves with tapes-
 tries

Nausikaa might have stooped o'er,
 while, between,
 Mirrors, effaced in their own clearness,
 send

Her only image on through deepening
 deeps

With endless repercussion of delight, —
 Bringer of life, witching each sense to
 soul,

That sometimes almost gives me to
 believe

I might have been a poet, gives at least
 A brain desaxonomized, an ear that makes
 Music where none is, and a keener pang
 Of exquisite surmise outleaping
 thought, —

Her will I pamper in her luxury:
 No crumpled rose-leaf of too careless
 choice

Shall bring a northern nightmare to her
 dreams,

Vexing with sense of exile; hers shall be
 The invitiative firstlings of experience,
 Vibrations felt but once and felt life-
 long:

O, more than half-way turn that Gre-
 cian front

Upon me, while with self-rebuke I spell,
 On the plain fillet that confines thy
 hair

In conscious bounds of seeming uncon-
 straint,

The *Naught in overplus*, thy race's
 badge!

One feast for her I secretly designed
 In that Old World so strangely beautiful
 To us the disinherited of eld, —
 A day at Chartres, with no soul beside
 To roil with pedant prate my joy serene
 And make the minster shy of confi-
 dence,

I went, and, with the Saxon's pious care,
 First ordered dinner at the pea-green
 inn,

The flies and I its only customers,
 Till by and by there came two English-
 men,

Who made me feel, in their engaging
 way,

I was a poacher on their self-preserve,
 Intent constructively on lese-anglicism.
 To them (in those old razor-ridden
 days)

My beard translated me to hostile
French;

So they, desiring guidance in the town,
Half condescended to my baser sphere,
And, clubbing in one mess their lack of
phrase,
Set their best man to grapple with the
Gaul.

"Esker vous ate a nabitang?" he asked;
"I never ate one; are they good?"
asked I;

Whereat they stared, then laughed, and
we were friends,
The seas, the wars, the centuries inter-
posed,

Abolished in the truce of common speech
And mutual comfort of the mother-
tongue.

Like escaped convicts of Propriety,
They furtively partook the joys of men,
Glancing behind when buzzed some
louder fly.

Eluding these, I loitered through the
town,
With hope to take my minster una-
wares

In its grave solitude of memory.
A pretty burgh, and such as Fancy loves
For bygone grandeurs, faintly rumor-
ous now

Upon the mind's horizon, as of storm
Brooding its dreamy thunders far aloof,
That mingle with our mood, but not
disturb.

Its once grim bulwarks, tamed to lovers'
walks,

Look down unwatchful on the sliding
Eure,

Whose listless leisure suits the quiet
place,

Lisping among his shallows homelike
sounds

At Concord and by Bankside heard
before.

Chance led me to a public pleasure-
ground,

Where I grew kindly with the merry
groups,

And blessed the Frenchman for his
simple art

Of being domestic in the light of day.
His language has no word, we growl,
for Home;

But he can find a fireside in the sun,
Play with his child, make love, and
shriek his mind,

By throngs of strangers undisprivacied.
He makes his life a public gallery,
Nor feels himself till what he feels
comes back

In manifold reflection from without;
While we, each pore alert with con-
sciousness,

Hide our best selves as we had stolen
them,

And each bystander a detective were,
Keen-eyed for every chink of undisguise

So, musing o'er the problem which was
best,—

A life wide-windowed, shining all
abroad,

Or curtains drawn to shield from sight
profane

The rites we pay to the mysterious I,—
With outward senses furloughed and
head bowed

I followed some fine instinct in my
feet,

Till, to unbend me from the loom of
thought,

Looking up suddenly, I found mine eyes
Confronted with the minster's vast re-
pose.

Silent and gray as forest-leaguered cliff
Left inland by the ocean's slow retreat,
That hears afar the breeze-borne rote,
and longs,

Remembering shocks of surf that clomb
and fell,

Spume-sliding down the baffled decu-
man,

It rose before me, patiently remote
From the great tides of life it breasted
once,

Hearing the noise of men as in a dream.
I stood before the triple northern port,
Where dedicated shapes of saints and
kings,

Stern faces bleared with immemorial
watch,

Looked down benignly grave and
seemed to say,

*Ye come and go incessant; we remain
Safe in the hallowed quiets of the past;
Be reverent, ye who flit and are forgot,
Of faith so nobly realized as this.*

I seem to have heard it said by learned
 folk
 Who drench you with æsthetics till you
 feel
 As if all beauty were a ghastly bore,
 The faucet to let loose a wash of words,
 That Gothic is not Grecian, therefore
 worse ;
 But, being convinced by much experi-
 ment
 How little inventiveness there is in
 man,
 Grave copier of copies, I give thanks
 For a new relish, careless to inquire
 My pleasure's pedigree, if so it please,
 Nobly, I mean, nor renegade to art.
 The Grecian gluts me with its perfect-
 ness,
 Unanswerable as Euclid, self-contained,
 The one thing finished in this hasty
 world,
 Forever finished, though the barbarous
 pit,
 Fanatical on hearsay, stamp and shout
 As if a miracle could be encored.
 But ah ! this other, this that never ends,
 Still climbing, luring fancy still to climb,
 As full of morals half-divined as life,
 Graceful, grotesque, with ever new
 surprise
 Of hazardous caprices sure to please,
 Heavy as nightmare, airy-light as fern,
 Imagination's very self in stone !
 With one long sigh of infinite release
 From pedantries past, present, or to
 come,
 I looked, and owned myself a happy
 Goth.
 Your blood is mine, ye architects of
 dream,
 Builders of aspiration incomplete,
 So more consummate, souls self-confi-
 dent,
 Who felt your own thought worthy of
 record
 In monumental pomp ! No Grecian drop
 Rebukes these veins that leap with
 kindred thrill,
 After long exile, to the mother-tongue.

Ovid in Pontus, puling for his Rome
 Of men invirile and disnated danies
 That poison sucked from the Attic
 bloom decayed,

Shrank with a shudder from the blue-
 eyed race
 Whose force rough-handed should re-
 new the world,
 And from the dregs of Romulus express
 Such wine as Dante poured, or he who
 blew
 Roland's vain blast, or sang the Cam-
 peador
 In verse that clanks like armor in the
 charge, —
 Homeric juice, if brimmed in Odin's
 horn.
 And they could build, if not the col-
 umned fane
 That from the height gleamed seaward
 many-hued,
 Something more friendly with their
 ruder skies :
 The gray spire, molten now in driving
 mist,
 Now lulled with the incommunicable
 blue ;
 The carvings touched to meanings new
 with snow,
 Or commented with fleeting grace of
 shade ;
 The statues, motley as man's memory,
 Partial as that, so mixed of true and
 false,
 History and legend meeting with a kiss
 Across this bound-mark where their
 realms confine ;
 The painted windows, frecking gloom
 with glow,
 Dusking the sunshine which they seem
 to cheer,
 Meet symbol of the senses and the soul ;
 And the whole pile, grim with the
 Northman's thought
 Of life and death, and doom, life's equal
 fee, —
 These were before me : and I gazed
 abashed,
 Child of an age that lectures, not creates,
 Plastering our swallow-nests on the
 awful Past,
 And twittering round the work of larger
 men,
 As we had builded what we but deface.
 Far up the great bells wallowed in
 delight,
 Tossing their clangors o'er the heedless
 town,

To call the worshippers who never
came,
Or women mostly, in loath twos and
threes.

I entered, reverent of whatever shrine
Guards piety and solace for my kind
Or gives the soul a moment's truce of
God,

And shared decorous in the ancient rite
My sterner fathers held idolatrous.
The service over, I was tranced in
thought :

Solemn the deepening vaults, and most
to me,
Fresh from the fragile realm of deal and
paint,

Or brick mock-pious with a marble
front ;

Solemn the lift of high-embowered roof,
The clustered stems that spread in
boughs disleaved,

Through which the organ blew a dream
of storm, —

Though not more potent to sublime
with awe

And shut the heart up in tranquillity,
Than aisles to me familiar that o'erarch
The conscious silences of brooding
woods,

Centurial shadows, cloisters of the elk :
Yet here was sense of undefined regret,
Irreparable loss, uncertain what :

Was all this grandeur but anachro-
nism, —

A shell divorced of its informing life,
Where the priest housed him like a
hermit-crab,

An alien to that faith of elder days
That gathered round it this fair shape
of stone ?

Is old Religion but a spectre now,
Haunting the solitude of darkened
minds,

Mocked out of memory by the sceptic
day ?

Is there no corner safe from peeping
Doubt,

Since Gutenberg made thought cosmop-
olite

And stretched electric threads from
mind to mind ?

Nay, did Faith build this wonder ? or
did Fear,

That makes a fetish and misnames it God

(Blockish or metaphysic, matters not),
Contrive this coop to shut its tyrant in,
Appeased with playthings, that he might
not harm ?

I turned and saw a beldame on her
knees ;

With eyes astray, she told mechanic
beads

Before some shrine of saintly woman-
hood,

Bribed intercessor with the far-off
Judge :

Such my first thought, by kindlier soon
rebuked,

Pleading for whatsoever touches life
With upward impulse : be He nowhere
else,

God is in all that liberates and lifts,
In all that humbles, sweetens, and con-
soles :

Blesséd the natures shored on every side
With landmarks of hereditary thought !
Thrice happy they that wander not life-
long

Beyond near succor of the household
faith,

The guarded fold that shelters not con-
fines !

Their steps find patience in familiar
paths,

Printed with hope by loved feet gone
before

Of parent, child, or lover, glorified
By simple magic of dividing Time.

My lids were moistened as the woman
knelt,

And — was it will, or some vibration
faint

Of sacred Nature, deeper than the
will ? —

My heart occultly felt itself in hers,
Through mutual intercession gently
leagued.

Or was it not mere sympathy of brain ?
A sweetness intellectually conceived

In simpler creeds to me impossible ?
A juggle of that pity for ourselves

In others, which puts on such pretty
masks

And snares self-love with bait of charity ?
Something of all it might be, or of none :
Yet for a moment I was snatched away

And had the evidence of things not
seen ;
For one rapt moment ; then it all came
back,
This age that blots out life with ques-
tion-marks,
This nineteenth century with its knife
and glass
That make thought physical, and thrust
far off
The Heaven, so neighborly with man
of old,
To voids sparse-sown with alienated
stars.

'T is irrecoverable, that ancient faith,
Homely and wholesome, suited to the
time,
With rod or candy for child-minded
men :
No theologic tube, with lens on lens
Of syllogism transparent, brings it
near, —
At best resolving some new nebula,
Or blurring some fixed-star of hope to
mist.
Science was Faith once ; Faith were
Science now,
Would she but lay her bow and arrows
by
And arm her with the weapons of the
time.
Nothing that keeps thought out is safe
from thought.
For there's no virgin-fort but self-
respect,
And Truth defensive hath lost hold on
God.
Shall we treat Him as if He were a
child
That knew not His own purpose ? nor
dare trust
The Rock of Ages to their chemic tests,
Lest some day the all-sustaining base
divine
Should fail from under us, dissolved in
gas ?
The arm'd eye that with a glance dis-
cerns
In a dry blood-speck between ox and
man,
Stares helpless at this miracle called life,
This shaping potency behind the egg,
This circulation swift of deity,

Where suns and systems inconspicuous
float
As the poor blood-disks in our mortal
veins.
Each age must worship its own thought
of God,
More or less earthy, clarifying still
With subsidence continuous of the
dregs ;
Nor saint nor sage could fix immutably
The fluent image of the unstable Best,
Still changing in their very hands that
wrought :
To-day's eternal truth To-morrow
proved
Frail as frost-landscapes on a window-
pane.
Meanwhile Thou smiledst, inaccessible,
At Thought's own substance made a
cage for Thought,
And Truth locked fast with her own
master-key ;
Nor didst Thou reckon what image man
might make
Of his own shadow on the flowing
world ;
The climbing instinct was enough for
Thee.
Or wast Thou, then, an ebbing tide
that left
Strewn with dead miracle those eldest
shores,
For men to dry, and dryly lecture on,
Thyself thenceforth incapable of flood ?
Idle who hopes with prophets to be
snatched
By virtue in their mantles left below ;
Shall the soul live on other men's re-
port,
Herself a pleasing fable of herself ?
Man cannot be God's outlaw if he would,
Nor so abscond him in the caves of
sense
But Nature still shall search some crev-
ice out
With messages of splendor from that
Source
Which, dive he, soar he, baffles still and
lures.
This life were brutish did we not some-
times
Have intimation clear of wider scope,
Hints of occasion infinite, to keep
The soul alert with noble discontent

And onward yearnings of unstilled
 desire ;
 Fruitless, except we now and then
 divined
 A mystery of Purpose, gleaming
 through
 The secular confusions of the world,
 Whose will we darkly accomplish,
 doing ours.
 No man can think nor in himself
 perceive,
 Sometimes at waking, in the street
 sometimes,
 Or on the hillside, always unforwarned,
 A grace of being, finer than himself,
 That beckons and is gone, — a larger life
 Upon his own impinging, with swift
 glimpse
 Of spacious circles luminous with mind,
 To which the ethereal substance of his
 own
 Seems but gross cloud to make that
 visible,
 Touched to a sudden glory round the
 edge.
 Who that hath known these visitations
 fleet
 Would strive to make them trite and
 ritual ?
 I, that still pray at morning and at eve,
 Loving those roots that feed us from
 the past,
 And prizing more than Plato things I
 learned
 At that best academe, a mother's knee,
 Thrice in my life perhaps have truly
 prayed,
 Thrice, stirred below my conscious self,
 have felt
 That perfect disenthralment which is
 God ;
 Nor know I which to hold worst
 enemy, —
 Him who on speculation's windy waste
 Would turn me loose, stript of the rai-
 ment warm
 By Faith contrived against our naked-
 ness,
 Or him who, cruel-kind, would fain
 obscure,
 With painted saints and paraphrase of
 God,
 The soul's east-window of divine sur-
 prise.

Where others worship I but look and
 long ;
 For, though not recreant to my fathers'
 faith,
 Its forms to me are weariness, and most
 That dromy vacuum of compulsory
 prayer,
 Still pumping phrases for the Ineffable,
 Though all the valves of memory gasp
 and wheeze.
 Words that have drawn transcendent
 meanings up
 From the best passion of all bygone
 time,
 Steeped through with tears of triumph
 and remorse,
 Sweet with all sainthood, cleansed in
 martyr-fires,
 Can they, so consecrate and so inspired,
 By repetition wane to vexing wind ?
 Alas ! we cannot draw habitual breath
 In the thin air of life's suppremer heights,
 We cannot make each meal a sacra-
 ment,
 Nor with our tailors be disbodied
 souls, —
 We men, too conscious of earth's
 comedy,
 Who see two sides, with our posed
 selves debate,
 And only for great stakes can be sub-
 lime !
 Let us be thankful when, as I do here,
 We can read Bethel on a pile of stones,
 And, seeing where God *has* been, trust
 in Him
 Brave Peter Fischer there in Nurem-
 berg,
 Moulding Saint Sebald's miracles in
 bronze,
 Put saint and stander-by in that quaint
 garb
 Familiar to him in his daily walk,
 Not doubting God could grant a
 miracle
 Then and in Nuremberg, if so He
 would ;
 But never artist for three hundred years
 Hath dared the contradiction ludicrous
 Of supernatural in modern clothes.
 Perhaps the deeper faith that is to come
 Will see God rather in the strenuous
 doubt,

Than in the creed held as an infant's
hand
Holds purposeless whatso is placed
therein.

Say it is drift, not progress, none the
less,
With the old sextant of the fathers'
creed,

We shape our courses by new-risen
stars,
And, still lip-loyal to what once was
truth,

Smuggle new meanings under ancient
names,
Unconscious perverts of the Jesuit,
Time.

Change is the mask that all Continu-
ance wears
To keep us youngsters harmlessly
amused ;

Meanwhile some ailing or more watch-
ful child,
Sitting apart, sees the old eyes gleam
out,

Stern, and yet soft with humorous pity
too.
Whilere, men burnt men for a doubtful
point,

As if the mind were quenchable with
fire,
And Faith danced round them with her
war-paint on,

Devoutly savage as an Iroquois ;
Now Calvin and Servetus at one board
Snuff in grave sympathy a milder roast,
And o'er their claret settle Comte un-
read.

Fagot and stake were desperately sin-
cere :
Our cooler martyrdoms are done in
types ;

And flames that shine in controversial
eyes
Burn out no brains but his who kindles
them.

This is no age to get cathedrals built :
Did God, then, wait for one in Beth-
lehem ?

Worst is not yet : lo, where his coming
looms,
Of Earth's anarchic children latest
born,

Democracy, a Titan who hath learned

To laugh at Jove's old-fashioned thun-
derbolts, —
Could he not also forge them, if he
would ?

He, better skilled, with solvents merci-
less,
Loosened in air and borne on every
wind,

Saps unperceived : the calm Olympian
height
Of ancient order feels its bases yield,
And pale gods glance for help to gods
as pale.

What will be left of good or worshipful,
Of spiritual secrets, mysteries,
Of fair religion's guarded heritage,
Heirlooms of soul, passed downward
unprofaned

From eldest Ind ? This Western giant
coarse,
Scorning refinements which he lacks
himself,

Loves not nor heeds the ancestral
hierarchies,
Each rank dependent on the next
above

In orderly gradation fixed as fate.
King by mere manhood, nor allowing
aught

Of holier unction than the sweat of toil ;
In his own strength sufficient ; called
to solve,

On the rough edges of society,
Problems long sacred to the choicer
few,

And improvise what elsewhere men
receive
As gifts of deity ; tough foundling
reared

Where every man's his own Melchise-
dek,
How make him reverent of a King of
kings ?

Or Judge self-made, executor of laws
By him not first discussed and voted
on ?

For him no tree of knowledge is forbid,
Or sweeter if forbid. How save the ark,
Or holy of holies, unprofaned a day
From his unscrupulous curiosity
That handles everything as if to buy,
Tossing aside what fabrics delicate
Suit not the rough-and-tumble of his
ways ?

What hope for those fine-nerved hu-
manities
That made earth gracious once with
gentler arts,
Now the rude hands have caught the
trick of thought
And claim an equal suffrage with the
brain?

'The born disciple of an elder time,
(To me sufficient, friendlier than the
new,)
Who in my blood feel motions of the
Past,
I think benignant nature most for
this, —

A force of sympathy, or call it lack
Of character firm-planted, loosing me
From the pent chamber of habitual self
To dwell enlarged in alien modes of
thought,

Haply distasteful, wholesomer for that,
And through imagination to possess,
As they were mine, the lives of other
men.

This growth original of virgin soil,
By fascination felt in opposites,
Pleases and shocks, entices and per-
turbs.

In this brown-fisted rough, this shirt-
sleeved Cid,
This backwoods Charlemagne of em-
pires new,
Whose blundering heel instinctively
finds out

The goutier foot of speechless dignities,
Who, meeting Cæsar's self, would slap
his back,

Call him "Old Horse," and challenge
to a drink,

My lungs draw braver air, my breast
dilates

With ampler manhood, and I front
both worlds,

Of sense and spirit, as my natural fiefs,
To shape and then reshape them as I
will.

It was the first man's charter; why
not mine?

How forfeit? when deposed in other
hands?

Thou shudder'st, Ovid? Dost in him
forebode

A new avatar of the large-limbed Goth,
To break, or seem to break, tradition's
clew,

And chase to dreamland back thy gods
dethroned?

I think man's soul dwells nearer to the
east,

Nearer to morning's fountains than the
sun;

Herself the source whence all tradition
sprang,

Herself at once both labyrinth and
clew.

The miracle fades out of history,
But faith and wonder and the primal
earth

Are born into the world with every
child.

Shall this self-maker with the prying
eyes,

This creature disenchanting of respect
By the New World's new fiend, Pub-
licity,

Whose testing thumb leaves every-
where its smutch,

Not one day feel within himself the
need

Of loyalty to better than himself,
That shall ennoble him with the up-
ward look?

Shall he not catch the Voice that wan-
ders earth,

With spiritual summons, dreamed or
heard,

As sometimes, just ere sleep seals up
the sense,

We hear our Mother call from deeps of
time,

And, waking, find it vision, — none
the less

The benediction bides, old skies return,
And that unreal thing, pre-eminent,

Makes air and dream of all we see and
feel?

Shall he divine no strength unmade of
votes,

Inward, impregnable, found soon as
sought,

Not cognizable of sense, o'er sense
supreme?

His holy places may not be of stone,
Nor made with hands, yet fairer far
than aught

By artist feigned or pious araor reared,

Fit altars for who guards inviolate
God's chosen seat, the sacred form of
man.

Doubtless his church will be no hospital
For superannuate forms and mumping
shams,

No parlor where men issue policies
Of life-assurance on the Eternal Mind,
Nor his religion but an ambulance
To fetch life's wounded and malinger-

ers in,
Scorned by the strong; yet he, uncon-

scious heir
To the influence sweet of Athens and
of Rome,

And old Judæa's gift of secret fire,
Spite of himself shall surely learn to
know

And worship some ideal of himself,
Some divine thing, large-hearted,
brotherly,

Not nice in trifles, a soft creditor,
Pleased with his world, and hating only
cant.

And, if his Church be doubtful, it is sure
That, in a world, made for whatever
else,

Not made for mere enjoyment, — in a
world

Of toil but half-requited, or, at best,
Paid in some futile currency of
breath, —

A world of incompleteness, sorrow swift
And consolation laggard, whaisoe'er
The form of building or the creed pro-

fessed,
The Cross, bold type of shame to hom-

age turned,
Of an unfinished life that sways the
world,

Shall tower as sovereign emblem over
all.

The kobold Thought moves with us
when we shift

Our dwelling to escape him; perched
aloft

On the first load of household-stuff he
went;

For, where the mind goes, goes old fur-

niture.
I, who to Chartres came to feed my
eye

And give to Fancy one clear holiday,

Scarce saw the minster for the thoughts
it stirred

Buzzing o'er past and future with vain
quest.

Here once there stood a homely wood-

en church,
Which slow devotion nobly changed
for this

That echoes vaguely to my modern
steps.

By suffrage universal it was built,
As practised then, for all the country
came

From far as Rouen, to give votes for
God,

Each vote a block of stone securely laid
Obedient to the master's deep-mused
plan.

Will what our ballots rear, responsible
To no grave forethought, stand so long
as this,—

Delight like this the eye of after days
Brightening with pride that here, at
least, were men

Who meant and did the noblest thing
they knew?

Can our religion cope with deeds like
this?

We, too, build Gothic contract-shams,
because

Our deacons have discovered that it
pays,

And pews sell better under vaulted
roofs

Of plaster painted like an Indian squaw.
Shall not that Western Goth, of whom
we spoke,

So fiercely practical, so keen of eye,
Find out, some day, that nothing pays
but God,

Served whether on the smoke-shut
battle-field,

In work obscure done honestly, or vote
For truth unpopular, or faith maintained
To ruinous convictions, or good deeds

Wrought for good's sake, mindless of
heaven or hell

Shall he not learn that all prosperity,
Whose bases stretch not deeper than
the sense,

Is but a trick of this world's atmosphere,
A desert-born mirage of spire and dome,
Or find too late, the Past's long lesson
missed,

That dust the prophets shake from off
their feet

Grows heavy to drag down both tower
and wall?

I know not; but, sustained by sure
belief

That man still rises level with the
height

Of noblest opportunities, or makes
Such, if the time supply not, I can
wait.

I gaze round on the windows, pride of
France,

Each the bright gift of some mechanic
guild

Who loved their city and thought gold
well spent

To make her beautiful with piety;
I pause, transfigured by some stripe of
bloom,

And my mind throngs with shining
auguries,

Circle on circle, bright as seraphim,
With golden trumpets, silent, that await

The signal to blow news of good to
men.

Then the revulsion came that always
comes

After these dizzy elations of the mind:
And with a passionate pang of doubt I
cried,

"O mountain-born, sweet with snow-
filtered air

From uncontaminate wells of ether
drawn

And never-broken secrecies of sky,
Freedom, with anguish won, misprized

till lost,
They keep thee not who from thy sacred
eyes

Catch the consuming lust of sensual
good

And the brute's license of unfettered
will.

Far from the popular shout and venal
breath

Of Cleon blowing the mob's baser mind
To bubbles of wind-piloted conceit,

Thou shrinkest, gathering up thy skirts,
to hide

In fortresses of solitary thought
And private virtue strong in self-re-

straint.

Must we too forfeit thee misunderstood,
Content with names, nor inly wise to
know

That best things perish of their own
excess,

And quality o'er-driven becomes defect?
Nay, is it thou indeed that we have
glimpsed,

Or rather such illusion as of old
Through Athens glided menadlike and
Rome,

A shape of vapor, mother of vain dreams
And mutinous traditions, specious plea
Of the glaived tyrant and long-memoried
priest?"

I walked forth saddened; for all
thought is sad,

And leaves a bitterish savor in the
brain,—

Tonic, it may be, not delectable,—
And turned, reluctant, for a parting
look

At those old weather-pitted images
Of bygone struggle, now so sternly
calm.

About their shoulders sparrows had
built nests,

And fluttered, chirping, from gray
perch to perch,

Now on a mitre poising, now a crown,
Irreverently happy. While I thought
How confident they were, what careless
hearts

Flew on those lightsome wings and
shared the sun,

A larger shadow crossed; and, looking
up,

I saw where, nesting in the hoary
towers,

The sparrow-hawk slid forth on noise-
less air,

With sidelong head that watched the
joy below,

Grim Norman baron o'er this clan of
Kelts.

Enduring Nature, force conservative,
Indifferent to our noisy whims! Men
prate

Of all heads to an equal grade cashiered
On level with the dullest, and expect
(Sick of no worse distemper than them-
selves)

A wondrous cure-all in equality;

They reason that To-morrow must be
wise

Because To-day was not, nor Yester-
day,

As if good days were shapen of them-
selves,

Not of the very lifeblood of men's
souls ;

Meanwhile, long-suffering, imperturb-
able,

Thou quietly complet'st thy syllogism,
And from the premise sparrow here
below

Draw'st sure conclusion of the hawk
above,

Pleased with the soft-billed songster,
pleased no less

With the fierce beak of natures aquiline.

Thou beautiful Old Time, now hid
away

In the Past's valley of Avilion,
Haply, like Arthur, till thy wound be
healed,

Then to reclaim the sword and crown
again !

'Thrice beautiful to us ; perchance less
fair

To who possessed thee, as a mountain
seems

To dwellers round its bases but a heap
Of barren obstacle that lairs the storm
And the avalanche's silent bolt holds
back

Leashed with a hair, — meanwhile
some far-off clown,

Hereditary delver of the plain,
Sees it an unmoved vision of repose,

Nest of the morning, and conjectures
there

The dance of streams to idle shepherds'
pipes,

And fairer habitations softly hung
On breezy slopes, or hid in valleys cool,

For happier men. No mortal ever
dreams

That the scant isthmus he encamps
upon

Between two oceans, one, the Stormy,
passed,

And one, the Peaceful, yet to venture
on,

Has been that future whereto prophets
yearned

For the fulfilment of Earth's cheated
hope,

Shall be that past which nerveless
poets moan

As the lost opportunity of song.

O Power, more near my life than life
itself

(Or what seems life to us in sense
immured),

Even as the roots, shut in the darksome
earth,

Share in the tree-top's joyance, and
conceive

Of sunshine and wide air and winged
things

By sympathy of nature, so do I
Have evidence of Thee so far above,

Yet in and of me ! Rather Thou the
root

Invisibly sustaining, hid in light,
Not darkness, or in darkness made by

us.

If sometimes I must hear good men
debate

Of other witness of Thyself than Thou,
As if there needed any help of ours

To nurse Thy flickering life, that else
must cease,

Blown out, as 't were a candle, by men's
breath,

My soul shall not be taken in their snare,
To change her inward surety for their

doubt

Muffled from sight in formal robes of
proof :

While she can only feel herself through
Thee,

I fear not Thy withdrawal ; more I fear,
Seeing, to know Thee not, hoodwinked
with dreams

Of signs and wonders, while, unnoticed,
Thou,

Walking Thy garden still, commun'st
with men,
Missed in the commonplace of miracle.

THREE MEMORIAL POEMS.

"Coscienza fusca
O della propria o dell' altrui vergogna
Pur sentirà la tua parola brusca."

If I let fall a word of bitter mirth
When public shames more shameful pardon won,
Some have misjudged me, and my service done,
If small, yet faithiul, deemed of little worth :
T' through veins that drew their life from Western earth
Two hundred years and more my blood hath run
In no polluted course from sire to son ;
And thus was I predestined ere my birth
T' o love the soil wherewith my fibres own
Instinctive sympathies ; yet love it so
As honor would, nor lightly to dethrone
Judgment, the stamp of manhood, nor forego
T' he son's right to a mother dearer grown
With growing knowledge and more chaste than snow.

THREE MEMORIAL POEMS.

TO
E. L. GODKIN,
IN CORDIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HIS EMINENT SERVICE
IN HEIGHTENING AND PURIFYING THE TONE
OF OUR POLITICAL THOUGHT,

This Volume
IS DEDICATED.

* * * Readers, it is hoped, will remember that, by his Ode at the Harvard Commemoration, the author had precluded himself from many of the natural outlets of thought and feeling common to such occasions as are celebrated in this little volume.

ODE

READ AT THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIGHT AT CONCORD BRIDGE.

19TH APRIL, 1875.

I.

Who cometh over the hills,
Her garments with morning sweet,
The dance of a thousand rills
Making music before her feet?
Her presence freshens the air;
Sunshine steals light from her face;
The leaden footstep of Care
Leaps to the tune of her pace,
Fairness of all that is fair,
Grace at the heart of all grace,
Sweetener of hut and of hall,
Bringer of life out of naught,
Freedom, O, fairest of all
The daughters of Time and Thought!

II.

She cometh, cometh to-day:
Hark! hear ye not her tread,
Sending a thrill through your clay,
Under the sod there, ye dead,
Her nurslings and champions?
Do ye not hear, as she comes,
The bay of the deep-mouthed guns,
The gathering buzz of the drums?
The bells that called ye to prayer,
How wildly they clamor on her,
Crying, "She cometh! prepare
Her to praise and her to honor,
That a hundred years ago
Scattered here in blood and tears
Potent seeds wherefrom should grow
Gladness for a hundred years!"

III.

Tell me, young men, have ye seen,
Creature of diviner mien
For true hearts to long and cry for,

Manly hearts to live and die for?
 What hath she that others want?
 Brows that all endearments haunt,
 Eyes that make it sweet to dare,
 Smiles that glad untimely death,
 Looks that fortify despair,
 Tones more brave than trumpet's
 breath;

Tell me, maidens, have ye known
 Household charm more sweetly rare,
 Grace of woman ampler blown,
 Modesty more debonair,
 Younger heart with wit full grown?
 O for an hour of my prime,
 The pulse of my hotter years,
 That I might praise her in rhyme
 Would tingle your eyelids to tears,
 Our sweetness, our strength, and our
 star,
 Our hope, our joy, and our trust,
 Who lifted us out of the dust,
 And made us whatever we are!

IV.

Whiter than moonshine upon snow
 Her raiment is, but round the hem
 Crimson stained; and, as to and fro
 Her sandals flash, we see on them,
 And on her instep veined with blue,
 Flecks of crimson, on those fair feet,
 High-arched, Diana-like, and fleet,
 Fit for no grosser stain than dew:
 O, call them rather christs than stains,
 Sacred and from heroic veins!
 For, in the glory-guarded pass,
 Her haughty and far-shining head
 She bowed to shrive Leonidas
 With his imperishable dead;
 Her, too, Morgarten saw,
 Where the Swiss lion fleshed his icy
 paw;
 She followed Cromwell's quenchless
 star
 Where the grim Puritan tread
 Shook Marston, Naseby, and Dunbar:
 Yea, on her feet are dearer dyes
 Yet fresh, nor looked on with untearful
 eyes.

V.

Our fathers found her in the woods
 Where Nature meditates and broods,
 The seeds of unexampled things
 Which Time to consummation brings

Through life and death and man's un-
 stable moods;
 They met her here, not recognized,
 A sylvan huntress clothed in furs,
 To whose chaste wants her bow sufficed,
 Nor dreamed what destinies were hers:
 She taught them bee-like to create
 Their simpler forms of Church and
 State;
 She taught them to endue
 The past with other functions than it
 knew,
 And turn in channels strange the uncer-
 tain stream of Fate;
 Better than all, she fenced them in their
 need
 With iron-handed Duty's sternest creed,
 'Gainst Self's lean wolf that ravens word
 and deed.

VI.

Why cometh she hither to-day
 To this low village of the plain
 Far from the Present's loud highway,
 From Trade's cool heart and seething
 brain?
 Why cometh she? She was not far
 away.
 Since the soul touched it, not in vain,
 With pathos of immortal gain,
 'T is here her fondest memories stay.
 She loves yon pine bemurmured ridge
 Where now our broad-browed poet
 sleeps,
 Dear to both Englands; near him he
 Who wore the ring of Canace;
 But most her heart to rapture leaps
 Where stood that era-parting bridge,
 O'er which, with footfall still as dew,
 The Old Time passed into the New;
 Where, as your stealthy river creeps,
 He whispers to his listening weeds
 Tales of sublimest homespun deeds.
 Here English law and English thought
 'Gainst the self-will of England fought;
 And here were men (coequal with their
 fate),
 Who did great things, unconscious they
 were great.
 They dreamed not what a die was cast
 With that first answering shot; what
 then?
 There was their duty; they were men
 Schooled the soul's inward gospel to
 obey,

Though leading to the lion's den,
 They felt the habit-hallowed world give
 way
 Beneath their lives, and on went they,
 Unhappy who was last.
 When Buttrick gave the word,
 That awful idol of the unchallenged
 Past,
 Strong in their love, and in their lineage
 strong,
 Fell crashing: if they heard it not,
 Yet the earth heard,
 Nor ever hath forgot,
 As on from startled throne to throne,
 Where Superstition sate or conscious
 Wrong,
 A shudder ran of some dread birth un-
 known.
 Thrice venerable spot!
 River more fateful than the Rubicon!
 O'er those red planks, to snatch her dia-
 dem,
 Man's Hope, star-girdled, sprang with
 them,
 And over ways untried the feet of Doom
 strode on.

VII.

Think you these felt no charms
 In their gray homesteads and em-
 bowered farms?
 In household faces waiting at the door
 Their evening step should lighten up no
 more?
 In fields their boyish feet had known?
 In trees their fathers' hands had set,
 And which with them had grown,
 Widening each year their leafy coronet?
 Felt they no pang of passionate regret
 For those unsolid goods that seem so
 much our own?
 These things are dear to every man that
 lives,
 And life prized more for what it lends
 than gives.
 Yea, many a tie, by iteration sweet,
 Strove to detain their fatal feet;
 And yet the enduring half they chose,
 Whose choice decides a man life's slave
 or king,
 The invisible things of God before the
 seen and known:
 Therefore their memory inspiration
 blows

With echoes gathering on from zone to
 zone:
 For manhood is the one immortal thing
 Beneath Time's changeful sky,
 And, where it lightened once, from age
 to age,
 Men come to learn, in grateful pilgrim-
 age,
 That length of days is knowing when to
 die.

VIII.

What marvellous change of things and
 men!
 She, a world-wandering orphan then,
 So mighty now! Those are her streams
 That whirl the myriad, myriad wheels
 Of all that does, and all that dreams,
 Of all that thinks, and all that feels,
 Through spaces stretched from sea to
 sea:
 By idle tongues and busy brains,
 By who doth right, and who refrains,
 Hers are our losses and our gains;
 Our maker and our victim she.

IX.

Maiden half mortal, half divine,
 We triumphed in thy coming; to the
 brinks
 Our hearts were filled with pride's tu-
 multuous wine;
 Better to-day who rather feels than
 thinks.
 Yet will some graver thoughts intrude,
 And cares of sterner mood;
 They won thee: who shall keep thee?
 From the deeps
 Where discrowned empires o'er their
 ruins brood,
 And many a thwarted hope wrings its
 weak hands and weeps,
 I hear the voice as of a mighty wind
 From all heaven's caverns rushing un-
 confined,
 "I, Freedom, dwell with Knowledge:
 I abide
 With men whom dust of faction cannot
 blind
 To the slow tracings of the Eternal
 Mind;
 With men by culture trained and for-
 tified,
 Who bitter duty to sweet lusts prefer,

Fearless to counsel and obey.
 Conscience my sceptre is, and law my
 sword,
 Not to be drawn in passion or in play,
 But terrible to punish and deter ;
 Implacable as God's word,
 Like it, a shepherd's crook to them that
 blindly err.
 Your firm-pulsed sires, my martyrs and
 my saints,
 Shoots of that only race whose patient
 sense
 Hath known to mingle flux with per-
 manence,
 Rated my chaste denials and restraints
 Above the moment's dear-paid para-
 dise :
 Beware lest, shifting with Time's grad-
 ual creep,
 The light that guided shine into your
 eyes.
 The envious Powers of ill nor wink nor
 sleep :
 Be therefore timely wise,
 Nor laugh when this one steals, and that
 one lies,
 As if your luck could cheat those sleep-
 less spies,
 Till the deaf Fury comes your house to
 sweep !”
 I hear the voice, and unafrighted bow ;
 Ye shall not be prophetic now,
 Heralds of ill, that darkening fly
 Between my vision and the rainbowed
 sky,
 Or on the left your hoarse forebodings
 croak
 From many a blasted bough
 On Yggdrasil's storm-sinewed oak,
 That once was green, Hope of the West,
 as thou :
 Yet pardon if I tremble while I boast ;
 For I have loved as those who pardon
 most.

x.

Away, ungrateful doubt, away !
 At least she is our own to-day.
 Break into rapture, my song,
 Verses, leap forth in the sun,
 Bearing the joyance along
 Like a train of fire as ye run !
 Pause not for choosing of words,
 Let them but blossom and sing
 Blithe as the orchards and birds

With the new coming of spring !
 Dance in your jollity, bells ;
 Shout, cannon ; cease not, ye drums ;
 Answer, ye hillside and dells ;
 Bow, all ye people ! She comes,
 Radiant, calm-fronted, as when
 She hallowed that April day.
 Stay with us ! Yes, thou shalt stay,
 Softener and strengthener of men,
 Freedom, not won by the vain,
 Not to be courted in play,
 Not to be kept without pain.
 Stay with us ! Yes, thou wilt stay,
 Handmaid and mistress of all,
 Kindler of deed and of thought,
 Thou that to hut and to hall
 Equal deliverance brought !
 Souls of her martyrs, draw near,
 Touch our dull lips with your fire,
 That we may praise without fear
 Her our delight, our desire,
 Our faith's inextinguishable star,
 Our hope, our remembrance, our trust,
 Our present, our past, our to be,
 Who will mingle her life with our dust
 And makes us deserve to be free !

UNDER THE OLD ELM.

POEM READ AT CAMBRIDGE ON THE
 HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF WASH-
 INGTON'S TAKING COMMAND OF THE
 AMERICAN ARMY, 3D JULY, 1775.

I.

1.

WORDS pass as wind, but where great
 deeds were done
 A power abides transfused from sire to
 son :
 The boy feels deeper meanings thrill his
 ear,
 That tingling through his pulse life-long
 shall run,
 With sure impulsion to keep honor
 clear,
 When, pointing down, his father whis-
 pers, “ Here,
 Here, where we stand, stood he, the
 purely Great,
 Whose soul no siren passion could un-
 sphere,

Then nameless, now a power and mixed
with fate."

Historic town, thou holdest sacred dust,
Once known to men as pious, learn'd,
just,

And one memorial pile that dares to
last ;

But Memory greets with reverential kiss
No spot in all thy circuit sweet as this,
Touched by that modest glory as it past,
O'er which yon elm hath piously dis-
played

These hundred years its monumental
shade.

2.

Of our swift passage through this scen-
ery

Of life and death, more durable than we,
What landmark so congenial as a tree
Repeating its green legend every spring,
And, with a yearly ring,
Recording the fair seasons as they flee,
Type of our brief but still-renewed
mortality?

We fall as leaves : the immortal trunk
remains,

Builted with costly juice of hearts and
brains

Gone to the mould now, whither all that
be

Vanish returnless, yet are procreant
still

In human lives to come of good or ill,
And feed unseen the roots of Destiny.

II.

I.

MEN'S monuments, grown old, forget
their names

They should eternize, but the place
Where shining souls have passed im-
bibes a grace

Beyond mere earth ; some sweetness of
their fames

Leaves in the soil its unextinguished
trace,

Pungent, pathetic, sad with nobler aims,
That penetrates our lives and heightens
them or shames.

This insubstantial world and fleet
Seems solid for a moment when we
stand

On dust ennobled by heroic feet
Once mighty to sustain a tottering
land,

And mighty still such burthen to up-
bear,

Nor doomed to tread the path of things
that merely were :

Our sense, refined with virtue of the
spot,

Across the mists of Lethe's sleepy
stream

Recalls him, the sole chief without a
blot,

No more a pallid image and a dream,
But as he dwelt with men decorously
supreme.

2.

Our grosser minds need this terrestrial
hint

To raise long-buried days from tombs
of print :

"Here stood he," softly we repeat,
And lo, the statue shrined and still

In that gray minster-front we call the
Past,

Feels in its frozen veins our pulses
thrill,

Breathes living air and mocks at
Death's deceit.

It warms, it stirs, comes down to us at
last,

Its features human with familiar light,
A man, beyond the historian's art to
kill,

Or sculptor's to efface with patient
chisel-blight.

3.

Sure the dumb earth hath memory, nor
for naught

Was Fancy given, on whose enchanted
loom

Present and Past commingle, fruit and
bloom

Of one fair bough, inseparably wrought
Into the seamless tapestry of thought.

So charmed, with undeluded eye we see
In history's fragmentary tale

Bright clews of continuity,
Learn that high natures over Time pre-
vail,

And feel ourselves a link in that entail
That binds all ages past with all that
are to be.

III.

1.

BENEATH our consecrated elm
 A century ago he stood,
 Famed vaguely for that old fight in the
 wood
 Whose red surge sought, but could not
 overwhelm
 The life foredoomed to wield our rough-
 hewn helm : —
 From colleges, where now the gown
 To arms had yielded, from the town,
 Our rude self-summoned levies flocked
 to see
 The new-come chiefs and wonder
 which was he.
 No need to question long ; close-lipped
 and tall,
 Long trained in murder-brooding for-
 ests lone
 To bridle others' clamors and his own,
 Firmly erect, he towered above them
 all,
 The incarnate discipline that was to
 frèe
 With iron curb that armed democracy.

2.

A motley rout was that which came to
 stare,
 In raiment tanned by years of sun and
 storm,
 Of every shape that was not uniform,
 Dotted with regimentals here and
 there ;
 An army all of captains, used to pray
 And stiff in fight, but serious drill's
 despair,
 Skilled to debate their orders, not
 obey ;
 Deacons were there, selectmen, men
 of note
 In half-tamed hamlets ambushed round
 with woods,
 Ready to settle Freewill by a vote,
 But largely liberal to its private moods ;
 Prompt to assert by manners, voice, or
 pen,
 Or ruder arms, their rights as English-
 men,
 Nor much fastidious as to how and
 when :

Yet seasoned stuff and fittest to create
 A thought-staid army or a lasting
 state :
 Haughtily they said he was, at first :
 severe ;
 But owned, as all men own, the steady
 hand
 Upon the bridle, patient to command,
 Prized, as all prize, the justice pure
 from fear,
 And learned to honor first, then love
 him, then revere.
 Such power there is in clear-eyed self-
 restraint
 And purpose clean as light from every
 selfish taint.

3.

Musing beneath the legendary tree,
 The years between furl off : I seem to
 see
 The sun-flecks, shaken the stirred foli-
 age through,
 Dapple with gold his sober buff and
 blue
 And weave prophetic aureoles round
 the head
 That shines our beacon now nor dark-
 ens with the dead.
 O, man of silent mood,
 A stranger among strangers then,
 How art thou since renowned the Great,
 the Good,
 Familiar as the day in all the homes of
 men !
 The wingèd years, that winnow praise
 and blame,
 Blow many names out : they but fan
 to flame
 The self-renewing splendors of thy
 fame.

IV.

1.

How many subtlest influences unite,
 With spiritual touch of joy or pain,
 Invisible as air and soft as light,
 To body forth that image of the brain
 We call our Country, visionary shape,
 Loved more than woman, fuller of fire
 than wine,
 Whose charm can none define,
 Nor any, though he flee it, can escape !

All party-colored threads the weaver
 Time
 Sets in his web, now trivial, now sub-
 lime,
 All memories, all forebodings, hopes
 and fears,
 Mountain and river, forest, prairie, sea,
 A hill, a rock, a homestead, field, or
 tree,
 The casual gleanings of unreckoned
 years,
 Take goddess-shape at last and there is
 She,
 Old at our birth, new as the springing
 hours,
 Shrine of our weakness, fortress of our
 powers,
 Consoler, kindler, peerless mid her
 peers,
 A force that 'neath our conscious being
 stirs,
 A life to give ours permanence, when
 we
 Are borne to mingle our poor earth with
 hers,
 And all this glowing world goes with
 us on our biers.

2.

Nations are long results, by ruder ways
 Gathering the might that warrants
 length of days ;
 They may be pieced of half-reluctant
 shares
 Welded by hammer-strokes of broad-
 brained kings,
 Or from a doughty people grow, the
 heirs
 Of wise traditions widening cautious
 rings ;
 At best they are computable things,
 A strength behind us making us feel
 bold
 In right, or, as may chance, in wrong ;
 Whose force by figures may be summed
 and told,
 So many soldiers, ships, and dollars
 strong,
 And we but drops that bear compulsory
 part
 In the dumb throb of a mechanic heart ;
 But Country is a shape of each man's
 mind

Sacred from definition, unconfined
 By the cramped walls where daily
 drudgeries grind ;
 An inward vision, yet an outward birth
 Of sweet familiar heaven and earth ;
 A brooding Presence that stirs motions
 blind
 Of wings within our embryo being's
 shell
 That wait but her completer spell
 To make us eagle-natured, fit to dare
 Life's nobler spaces and untarnished
 air.

3.

You, who hold dear this self-conceived
 ideal,
 Whose faith and works alone can make
 it real,
 Bring all your fairest gifts to deck her
 shrine
 Who lifts our lives away from Thine
 and Mine
 And feeds the lamp of manhood more
 divine
 With fragrant oils of quenchless con-
 stancy.
 When all have done their utmost, surely
 he
 Hath given the best who gives a char-
 acter
 Erect and constant, which nor any shock
 Of loosened elements, nor the forceful
 sea
 Of flowing or of ebbing fates, can stir
 From its deep bases in the living rock
 Of ancient manhood's sweet security :
 And this he gave, serenely far from
 pride
 As baseness, boon with prosperous
 stars allied,
 Part of what nobler seed shall in our
 loins abide.

4.

No bond of men as common pride so
 strong,
 In names time-filtered for the lips of
 song,
 Still operant, with the primal Forces
 bound
 Whose currents, on their spiritual
 round,
 Transfuse our mortal will nor are gain-
 said :

These are their arsenals, these the exhaustless mines
 That give a constant heart in great designs;
 These are the stuff whereof such dreams are made
 As make heroic men: thus surely he
 Still holds in place the massy blocks he laid
 'Neath our new frame, enforcing soberly
 The self-control that makes and keeps
 a people free.

V.

1.

O, FOR a drop of that Cornelian ink
 Which gave Agricola dateless length
 of days,
 To celebrate him fitly, neither swerve
 To phrase unkempt, nor pass discretion's brink,
 With him so statue-like in sad reserve,
 So diffident to claim, so forward to deserve!
 Nor need I shun due influence of his fame
 Who, mortal among mortals, seemed
 as now
 The equestrian shape with unimpassioned brow,
 That paces silent on through vistas of acclaim.

2.

What figure more immovably august
 Than that grave strength so patient
 and so pure,
 Calm in good fortune, when it wavered,
 sure,
 That mind serene, impenetrably just,
 Modelled on classic lines so simple
 they endure?
 That soul so softly radiant and so white
 The track it left seems less of fire than
 light,
 Cold but to such as love distemperature?
 And if pure light, as some deem, be
 the force
 That drives rejoicing planets on their
 course,

Why for his power benign seek an impurer source?
 His was the true enthusiasm that burns
 long,
 Domestically bright,
 Fed from itself and shy of human sight,
 The hidden force that makes a lifetime
 strong,
 And not the short-lived fuel of a song.
 Passionless, say you? What is passion
 for
 But to sublime our natures and control
 To front heroic toils with late return,
 Or none, or such as shames the conqueror?
 That fire was fed with substance of the
 soul
 And not with holiday stubble, that
 could burn,
 Unpraised of men who after bonfires
 run,
 Through seven slow years of unadvancing war,
 Equal when fields were lost or fields
 were won,
 With breath of popular applause or
 blame,
 Nor fanned nor damped, unquenchably the same,
 Too inward to be reached by flaws of
 idle fame.

3.

Soldier and statesman, rarest unison;
 High-poised example of great duties
 done
 Simply as breathing, a world's honors
 won
 As life's indifferent gifts to all men
 born;
 Dumb for himself, unless it were to
 God,
 But for his barefoot soldiers eloquent,
 Tramping the snow to coral where they
 trod,
 Held by his awe in hollow-eyed content;
 Modest, yet firm as Nature's self; un-
 blamed
 Save by the men his nobler temper
 shamed;
 Never seduced through show of present
 good
 By other than unsetting lights to steer

New-trimmed in Heaven, nor than his
 steadfast mood
 More steadfast, far from rashness as
 from fear ;
 Rigid, but with himself first, grasping
 still
 In swerveless poise the wave-beat
 heim of will ;
 Not honored then or now because he
 wooed
 The popular voice, but that he still
 withstood ;
 Broad-minded, higher-souled, there is
 but one
 Who was all this and ours, and all
 men's — WASHINGTON.

4.

Minds strong by fits, irregularly great,
 That flash and darken like revolving
 lights,
 Catch more the vulgar eye unschooled
 to wait
 On the long curve of patient days and
 nights
 Rounding a whole life to the circle fair
 Of orb'd fulfilment ; and this balanced
 soul,
 So simple in its grandeur, coldly bare
 Of draperies theatric, standing there
 In perfect symmetry of self-control,
 Seems not so great at first, but greater
 grows
 Still as we look, and by experience
 learn
 How grand this quiet is, how nobly
 stern
 The discipline that wrought through
 lifelong throes
 That energetic passion of repose.

5.

A nature too decorous and severe,
 Too self-respectful in its griefs and
 joys,
 For ardent girls and boys
 Who find no genius in a mind so clear
 That its grave depths seem obvious and
 near,
 Nor a soul great that made so little
 noise.
 They feel no force in that calm-cadenced
 phrase,

The habitual full-dress of his well-bred
 mind,
 That seems to pace the minuet's courtly
 maze
 And tell of ampler leisures, roomier
 length of days.
 His firm-based brain, to self so little
 kind
 That no tumultuary blood could blind,
 Formed to control men, not amaze,
 Looms not like those that borrow
 height of haze :
 It was a world of statelier movement
 then
 Than this we fret in, he a denizen
 Of that ideal Rome that made a man
 for men.

VI.

I.

THE longer on this earth we live
 And weigh the various qualities of men,
 Seeing how most are fugitive,
 Or fitful gifts, at best, of now and then,
 Wind-wavered corpse-lights, daughters
 of the fen,
 The more we feel the high stern-
 featured beauty
 Of plain devotedness to duty,
 Steadfast and still, nor paid with mortal
 praise,
 But finding amplest recompense
 For life's ungarlanded expense
 In work done squarely and unwasted
 days.
 For this we honor him, that he could
 know
 How sweet the service and how free
 Of her, God's eldest daughter here be-
 low,
 And choose in meanest raiment which
 was she.

2.

Placid completeness, life without a fall
 From faith or highest aims, truth's
 breachless wall,
 Surely if any fame can bear the touch,
 His will say " Here ! " at the last trum-
 pet's call,
 The unexpressive man whose life ex-
 pressed so much.

VII.

1.

NEVER to see a nation born
 Hath been given to mortal man,
 Unless to those who, on that summer
 morn,
 Gazed silent when the great Virginian
 Unsheathed the sword whose fatal flash
 Shot union through the incoherent clash
 Of our loose atoms, crystallizing them
 Around a single will's unpliant stem,
 And making purpose of emotion rash.
 Out of that scabbard sprang, as from its
 womb,
 Nebulous at first but hardening to a star,
 Through mutual share of sunburst and
 of gloom,
 The common faith that made us what
 we are.

2.

That lifted blade transformed our jangling
 clans,
 Till then provincial, to Americans,
 And made a unity of wildering plans ;
 Here was the doom fixed : here is
 marked the date
 When this New World awoke to man's
 estate,
 Burnt its last ship and ceased to look
 behind :
 Nor thoughtless was the choice ; no love
 or hate
 Could from its poise move that deliberate
 mind,
 Weighing between too early and too late
 Those pitfalls of the man refused by
 Fate :
 His was the impartial vision of the great
 Who see not as they wish, but as they
 find.
 He saw the dangers of defeat, nor less
 The incomputable perils of success ;
 The sacred past thrown by, an empty
 rind ;
 The future, cloud-land, snare of prophets
 blind ;
 The waste of war, the ignominy of
 peace ;
 On either hand a sullen rear of woes,
 Whose garnered lightnings none could
 guess,
 Piling its thunder-heads and muttering
 " Cease ! "

Yet drew not back his hand, but gravely
 chose
 The seeming-desperate task whence our
 new nation rose.

3-

A noble choice and of immortal seed !
 Nor deem that acts heroic wait on
 chance
 Or easy were as in a boy's romance ;
 The man's whole life precludes the single
 deed
 That shall decide if his inheritance
 Be with the sifted few of matchless
 breed,
 Our race's sap and sustenance,
 Or with the unmotivated herd that only
 sleep and feed.
 Choice seems a thing indifferent ; thus
 or so,
 What matters it ? The Fates with
 mocking face
 Look on inexorable, nor seem to know
 Where the lot lurks that gives life's
 foremost place.
 Yet Duty's leaden casket holds it still,
 And but two ways are offered to our will,
 Toil with rare triumph, ease with safe
 disgrace,
 The problem still for us and all of hu-
 man race.
 He chose, as men choose, where most
 danger showed,
 Nor ever faltered 'neath the load
 Of petty cares, that gall great hearts the
 most.
 But kept right on the strenuous up-hill
 road,
 Strong to the end, above complaint or
 boast :
 The popular tempest on his rock-mailed
 coast
 Wasted its wind-borne spray,
 The noisy marvel of a day ;
 His soul sate still in its unstormed
 abode.

VIII.

VIRGINIA gave us this imperial man
 Cast in the massive mould
 Of those high-statured ages old
 Which into grander forms our mortal
 metal ran ;

She gave us this unblemished gentle-
 man :
 What shall we give her back but love
 and praise
 As in the dear old unestrangèd days
 Before the inevitable wrong began ?
 Mother of States and undiminished
 men,
 Thou gavest us a country, giving him,
 And we owe always what we owed thee
 then :
 The boon thou wouldst have snatched
 from us agen
 Shines as before with no abatement dim.
 A great man's memory is the only thing
 With influence to outlast the present
 whim
 And bind us as when here he knit our
 golden ring.
 All of him that was subject to the hours
 Lies in thy soil and makes it part of
 ours :
 Across more recent graves,
 Where unresentful Nature waves
 Her pennons o'er the shot-ploughed
 sod,
 Proclaiming the sweet Truce of God,
 We from this consecrated plain stretch
 out
 Our hands as free from afterthought or
 doubt
 As here the united North
 Poured her embrownèd manhood forth
 In welcome of our savior and thy son.
 Through battle we have better learned
 thy worth,
 The long-breathed valor and undaunted
 will,
 Which, like his own, the day's disaster
 done,
 Could, safe in manhood, suffer and be
 still.
 Both thine and ours the victory hardly
 won ;
 If ever with distempered voice or pen
 We have misdeemed thee, here we take
 it back,
 And for the dead of both don common
 black.
 Be to us evermore as thou wast then,
 As we forget thou hast not always been,
 Mother of States and unpolluted men,
 Virginia, fitly named from England's
 manly queen !

AN ODE

FOR THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1876.

I.

I.

ENTRANCED I saw a vision in the cloud
 That loitered dreaming in yon sunset
 sky,
 Full of fair shapes, half creatures of the
 eye,
 Half chance-evoked by the wind's fan-
 tasy
 In golden mist, an ever-shifting crowd :
 There, mid unreal forms that came and
 went
 In robes air-spun, of evanescent dye,
 A woman's semblance shone pre-emi-
 nent ;
 Not armed like Pallas, not like Hera
 proud,
 But, as on household diligence intent,
 Beside her visionary wheel she bent
 Like Aretè or Bertha, nor than they
 Less queenly in her port : about her
 knee
 Glad children clustered confident in
 play :
 Placid her pose, the calm of energy ;
 And over her broad brow in many a
 round
 (That loosened would have gilt her gar-
 ment's hem),
 Succinct, as toil prescribes, the hair was
 wound
 In lustrous coils, a natural diadem.
 The cloud changed shape, obsequious
 to the whim
 Of some transmuting influence felt in
 me,
 And, looking now, a wolf I seemed to
 see
 Limned in that vapor, gaunt and hun-
 ger-bold,
 Threatening her charge : resolve in
 every limb,
 Erect she flamed in mail of sun-wove
 gold,
 Penthesilea's self for battle dight ;
 One arm uplifted braced a flickering
 spear,
 And one her adamantine shield made
 light ;

Her face, helm-shadowed, grew a thing
to fear,
And her fierce eyes, by danger chal-
lenged, took
Her trident-sceptred mother's dauntless
look.
" I know thee now, O goddess-born !"
I cried,
And turned with loftier brow and firmer
stride ;
For in that spectral cloud-work I had
seen
Her image, bodied forth by love and
pride,
The fearless, the benign, the mother-
eyed,
The fairer world's toil-consecrated
queen.

2.

What shape by exile dreamed elates
the mind
Like hers whose hand, a fortress of
the poor,
No blood in lawful vengeance spilt be-
stains ?
Who never turned a suppliant from
her door ?
Whose conquests are the gains of all
mankind ?
To-day her thanks shall fly on every
wind,
Unstinted, unrebuked, from shore to
shore,
One love, one hope, and not a doubt
behind !
Cannon to cannon shall repeat her
praise,
Banner to banner flap it forth in flame ;
Her children shall rise up to bless her
name,
And wish her harmless length of days,
The mighty mother of a mighty brood,
Blessed in all tongues and dear to every
blood,
The beautiful, the strong, and, best of
all, the good !

3.

Seven years long was the bow
Of battle bent, and the heightening
Storm-heaps convulsed with the throe
Of their uncontainable lightening ;
Seven years long heard the sea

Crash of navies and wave-borne thun-
der ;
Then drifted the cloud-rack a-lee,
And new stars were seen, a world's
wonder ;
Each by her sisters made bright,
All binding all to their stations,
Cluster of manifold light
Startling the old constellations :
Men looked up and grew pale :
Was it a comet or star,
Omen of blessing or bale,
Hung o'er the ocean afar ?

4.

Stormy the day of her birth :
Was she not born of the strong,
She, the last ripeness of earth,
Beautiful, prophesied long ?
Stormy the days of her prime :
Hers are the pulses that beat
Higher for perils sublime,
Making them fawn at her feet.
Was she not born of the strong ?
Was she not born of the wise ?
Daring and counsel belong
Of right to her confident eyes :
Human and motherly they,
Careless of station or race :
Hearken ! her children to-day
Shout for the joy of her face.

II.

I.

No praises of the past are hers,
No fanes by hallowing time caressed,
No broken arch that ministers
To some sad instinct in the breast :
She has not gathered from the years
Grandeur of tragedies and tears,
Nor from long leisure the unrest
That finds repose in forms of classic
grace :
These may delight the coming race
Who haply shall not count it to our
crime
That we who fain would sing are here
before our time.
She also hath her monuments ;
Not such as stand decrepitably resigned
To ruin-mark the path of dead events

That left no seed of better days behind,
 The tourist's pensioners that show their scars
 And maunder of forgotten wars ;
 She builds not on the ground, but in the mind,
 Her open-hearted palaces
 For larger-thoughted men with heaven
 and earth at ease :
 Her march the plump mow marks, the
 sleepless wheel,
 The golden sheaf, the self-swayed commonweal ;
 The happy homesteads hid in orchard
 trees
 Whose sacrificial smokes through
 peaceful air
 Rise lost in heaven, the household's
 silent prayer ;
 What architect hath bettered these ?
 With softened eye the westward traveller
 sees
 A thousand miles of neighbors side by
 side,
 Holding by toil-won titles fresh from
 God
 The lands no serf or seigneur ever trod,
 With manhood latent in the very sod,
 Where the long billow of the wheat-
 field's tide
 Flows to the sky across the prairie
 wide,
 A sweeter vision than the castled
 Rhine,
 Kindly with thoughts of Ruth and
 Bible-days benign.

2.

○ ancient commonwealths, that we
 revere
 Haply because we could not know you
 near,
 Your deeds like statues down the
 aisles of Time
 Shine peerless in memorial calm sub-
 lime,
 And Athens is a trumpet still, and
 Rome ;
 Yet which of your achievements is not
 foam
 Weighed with this one of hers (below
 you far

In fame, and born beneath a milder
 star),
 That to Earth's orphans, far as curves
 the dome,
 Of death-deaf sky, the bounteous West
 means home,
 With dear precedency of natural ties
 That stretch from roof to roof and make
 men gently wise ?
 And if the nobler passions wane,
 Distorted to base use, if the near goal
 Of insubstantial gain
 Tempt from the proper race-course of
 the soul
 That crowns their patient breath
 Whose feet, song-pinioned, are too fleet
 for Death,
 Yet may she claim one privilege urbane
 And haply first upon the civic roll,
 That none can breathe her air nor grow
 humane.

3.

O, better far the briefest hour
 Of Athens self-consumed, whose plastic
 power
 Hid Beauty safe from Death in words
 or stone ;
 Of Rome, fair quarry where those eagles
 crowd
 Whose fulgurous vans about the world
 had blown
 Triumphant storm and seeds of polity ;
 Of Venice, fading o'er her shipless sea,
 Last iridescence of a sunset cloud ;
 Than this inert prosperity,
 This bovine comfort in the sense alone !
 Yet art came slowly even to such as
 those,
 Whom no past genius cheated of their
 own
 With prudence of o'er-mastering pre-
 cedent ;
 Petal by petal spreads the perfect rose,
 Secure of the divine event ;
 And only children rend the bud half-
 blown
 To forestall Nature in her calm intent :
 Time hath a quiver full of purposes
 Which miss not of their aim, to us un-
 known,
 And brings about the impossible with
 ease :
 Haply for us the ideal dawn shall break

From where in legend-tinted line
 The peaks of Hellas drink the morn-
 ing's wine,
 To tremble on our lids with mystic
 sign
 Till the drowsed ichior in our veins
 awake
 And set our pulse in tune with moods
 divine :
 Long the day lingered in its sea-fringed
 nest,
 Then touched the Tuscan hills with
 golden lance
 And paused ; then on to Spain and
 France
 The splendor flew, and Albion's misty
 crest :
 Shall Ocean bar him from his destined
 West ?
 Or are we, then, arrived too late,
 Doomed with the rest to grope discon-
 solate,
 Foreclosed of Beauty by our modern
 date ?

III.

1.

POETS, as their heads grow gray,
 Look from too far behind the eyes,
 Too long-experienced to be wise
 In guileless youth's diviner way ;
 Life sings not now, but prophecies ;
 Time's shadows they no more behold,
 But, under them, the riddle old
 That mocks, bewilders, and defies :
 In childhood's face the seed of shame,
 In the green tree an ambushed flame,
 In Phosphor a vaunt-guard of Night,
 They, though against their will, divine,
 And dread the care-dispelling wine
 Stored from the Muse's vintage bright,
 By age imbued with second-sight.
 From Faith's own eyelids there peeps
 out,
 Even as they look, the leer of doubt ;
 The festal wreath their fancy loads
 With care that whispers and forebodes :
 Nor this our triumph-day can blunt
 Megæra's goads.

2.

Murmur of many voices in the air
 Denounces us degenerate,

Unfaithful guardians of a noble fate,
 And prompts indifference or despair :
 Is this the country that we dreamed in
 youth,
 Where wisdom and not numbers should
 have weight,
 Seed-field of simpler manners, braver
 truth,
 Where shams should cease to dominate
 In household, church, and state ?
 Is this Atlantis ? This the unpoisoned
 soil,
 Sea-whelmed for ages and recovered
 late,
 Where parasitic greed no more should
 coil
 Round Freedom's stem to bend awry
 and blight
 What grew so fair, sole plant of love
 and light ?
 Who sit where once in crowned seclu-
 sion sate
 The long-proved athletes of debate
 Trained from their youth, as none
 thinks needful now ?
 Is this debating-club where boys dis-
 pute,
 And wrangle o'er their stolen fruit,
 The Senate, erewhile cloister of the
 few,
 Where Clay once flashed and Webster's
 cloudy brow
 Brooded those bolts of thought that all
 the horizon knew ?

3.

O, as this pensive moonlight blurs my
 pines,
 Here as I sit and meditate these lines,
 To gray-green dreams of what they are
 by day,
 So would some light, not reason's sharp-
 edged ray,
 Trance me in moonshine as before the
 flight
 Of years had won me this unwelcome
 right
 To see things as they are, or shall be
 soon,
 In the frank prose of undissembling
 noon !

4.

Back to my breast, ungrateful sigh !
 Whoever fails, whoever errs,

The penalty be ours, not hers !
 The present still seems vulgar, seen too
 nigh ;
 The golden age is still the age that 's
 past :

I ask no drowsy opiate
 To dull my vision of that only state
 Founded on faith in man, and therefore
 sure to last.

For, O, my country, touched by thee,
 The gray hairs gather back their gold ;
 Thy thought sets all my pulses free ;
 The heart refuses to be old ;
 The love is all that I can see.
 Not to thy natal-day belong
 Time's prudent doubt or age's wrong,
 But gifts of gratitude and song :
 Unsummoned crowd the thankful words,
 As sap in spring-time floods the tree,
 Foreboding the return of birds,
 For all that thou hast been to me !

IV.

1.

FLAWLESS his heart and tempered to
 the core
 Who, beckoned by the forward-leaning
 wave,
 First left behind him the firm-footed
 shore,
 And, urged by every nerve of sail and
 oar,
 Steered for the Unknown which gods to
 mortals gave,
 Of thought and action the mysterious
 door,
 Bugbear of fools, a summons to the
 brave :
 Strength found he in the unsympathiz-
 ing sun,
 And strange stars from beneath the
 horizon won,
 And the dumb ocean pitilessly grave :
 High-hearted surely he ;
 But bolder they who first off-cast
 Their moorings from the habitable Past
 And ventured chartless on the sea
 Of storm-engendering Liberty :
 For all earth's width of waters is a span,
 And their convulsed existence mere re-
 pose,
 Matched with the unstable heart of man,

Shoreless in wants, mist-girt in all it
 knows,
 Open to every wind of sect or clan,
 And sudden-passionate in ebbs and
 flows.

2.

They steered by stars the elder shipmen
 knew,
 And laid their courses where the cur-
 rents draw
 Of ancient wisdom channelled deep in
 law,
 The undaunted few
 Who changed the Old World for the
 New,
 And more devoutly prized
 Than all perfection theorized
 The more imperfect that had roots and
 grew.

They founded deep and well,
 Those danger-chosen chiefs of men
 Who still believed in Heaven and Hell,
 Nor hoped to find a spell,
 In some fine flourish of a pen,
 To make a better man
 Than long-considering Nature will or
 can,

Secure against his own mistakes,
 Content with what life gives or takes,
 And acting still on some fore-ordered
 plan,
 A cog of iron in an iron wheel,
 Too nicely poised to think or feel,
 Dumb motor in a clock-like common-
 weal.

They wasted not their brain in schemes
 Of what man might be in some bubble-
 sphere,
 As if he must be other than he seems
 Because he was not what he should be
 here,
 Postponing Time's slow proof to petu-
 lant dreams :

Yet herein they were great
 Beyond the incredulous lawgivers of
 yore,
 And wiser than the wisdom of the shelf,
 That they conceived a deeper-rooted
 state,
 Of harder growth, alive from rind to
 core,
 By making man sole sponsor of him-
 self.

3.

God of our fathers, Thou who wast,
 Art, and shalt be when those eye-wise
 who flout

Thy secret presence shall be lost
 In the great light that dazzles them to
 doubt,

We, sprung from loins of stalwart
 men

Whose strength was in their trust

That Thou wouldst make thy dwelling
 in their dust

And walk with them a fellow-citizen
 Who build a city of the just,

We, who believe Life's bases rest
 Beyond the probe of chemic test,

Still, like our fathers, feel Thee near,
 Sure that, while lasts the immutable
 decree,

The land to Human Nature dear
 Shall not be unbeloved of Thee.





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